OPTIONS 2000:

A FRAMEWORK FOR MUNICIPAL RENEWAL

NORTHERN SECTOR

FINAL REPORT

TASK FORCE

ON MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE RENEWAL

101-01877/

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

August 2000

Hon. Jack Hillson
Minister of Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs,
Culture and Housing

Dear Mr. Hillson:

We are pleased to transmit the Final Report on Municipal Legislative Renewal for the municipal sector in northern Saskatchewan.

We believe that with the submission of this report on the municipal sector in northern Saskatchewan, and the report on the rural and urban municipal sectors in southern Saskatchewan, we have fulfilled our mandate as outlined in Order in Council 507/1998 dated August 13, 1998.

In keeping with our mandate we have focused our efforts on providing the 'building blocks' rather than the plans or 'blue-prints' for municipal renewal. Responsibility for producing the plans or 'blue-prints' for renewal rests with provincial and municipal officials and the ratepayers they represent and serve.

We believe that the majority of people in northern Saskatchewan expect to see both a plan and progress on municipal renewal.

It is generally recognized that there is much that needs to be done soon and well within the municipal sector.

Our hope is that this report will stimulate widespread interest and discussion in northern Saskatchewan on the following:

- The need for municipal renewal; and
- The nature of municipal renewal.

We sincerely wish you, and all those who collaborate with and assist you in this important renewal initiative, every success.

Respectfully,

The Task Force on Municipal Legislative Renewal

Joseph Garcea (Chair)

Maria Lynn Freeland

Val Kononoff

Murray Westby

Bobby Woods

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TASK FORCE MANDATE

The Task Force on Municipal Legislative Renewal was mandated by the provincial government to conduct a review and make recommendations on the need for, and nature of, municipal legislative renewal in Saskatchewan.
The Task Force's mandate as outlined in Order in Council 507/1998 dated August 13, 1998 states:

"It is desirable and in the public interest to establish an advisory committee to be known as the Task Force on Municipal Legislative Renewal, for a period not exceeding two years from the date of this Order, to:

- *Consider the role and responsibilities of municipal government in Saskatchewan in the next decade;*
- *Confirm, or set new directions for the evolution and development of municipal governance;*
- *Define and clarify the relationship between provincial and municipal governments; and*
- *Make recommendations for municipal renewal.*

In fulfilling its mandate, the Task Force will:

1. *Undertake consultations on municipal issues with interested individuals and organizations in the province;*
2. *Identify existing, emerging and potential obstacles to the goal of appropriate and principled municipal governance in the province;*
3. *Review Saskatchewan's existing municipal legislation;*
4. *Review municipal legislative renewal initiatives in other provinces and territories and consider what may be of value for Saskatchewan; and*
5. *Produce a set of recommendations on the need for, and the nature of, changes to municipal legislation in Saskatchewan."*

TASK FORCE STAFF

Joseph Garcea	Director of Research and Analysis
Rod Nasewich	Policy Analyst
Michael Lachine	Policy Analyst
Gail Elliott	Administrator

TASK FORCE REPORTS

Copies of this report and other documents produced by the Task Force listed below can obtained from:

- Web-site **www.communilink.sk.ca/municipal_task_force**
- Saskatchewan Department of Municipal Affairs Culture and Housing.

The Task Force's public documents include:

- "Discussion Paper" (Spring 1999)
- "Issues and Options Workbook" (Fall 1999)
- "Visions and Views from Community Forums" (Fall 1999)
- "Interim Report" (February 2000)
- "Report of Public Hearings & Submissions" (Spring 2000)
- "Options 2000: A Framework for Municipal Renewal in the Rural and Urban Sectors" (August 2000)
- "Options 2000: A Framework for Municipal Renewal in the Northern Sector" (August 2000)
- "Options 2000: A Framework for Municipal Renewal: Summary of Final Reports (August 2000)

PART ONE:
INTRODUCTION

1. Focus of Report

Northern Municipal Sector

- This report focuses on the need for and nature of municipal renewal within the Northern Administration District in Saskatchewan. A separate report has been produced on the need for and nature of municipal renewal for the rural and urban municipal sectors in southern Saskatchewan.

- Nevertheless, some of the issues, options and potential directions profiled in this report may have some relevance for the rural and urban municipal sectors. Similarly, some of the issues, options and potential directions profiled in the report on the rural and urban sectors may have some relevance for the northern sector.

- The reason for this is that despite some significant differences between some northern and southern communities and municipal governments (e.g., geographic proximity and transportation links to neighbouring municipalities), they also have some significant similarities. This is particularly true in terms of their basic needs for both community and governmental capacity building as they enter the 21st century.

2. Purpose of Report

Stimulate Thinking

- The purpose of the report is to stimulate thinking on the following:
  - The requirements for municipal renewal;
  - The need for municipal renewal; and
  - The nature of municipal renewal.

Frameworks & Building Blocks for Renewal Not "Blueprints"

- Toward that end this report provides:
  - An overview of requirements for achieving municipal renewal;
  - An overview of the factors that create the need and impetus for renewal;
  - A detailed 'framework of issues, options, and potential directions' that should be considered in undertaking municipal renewal.

- In producing ***a 'framework of issues, options and potential directions'*** the objective is to produce the ***'building blocks'*** for municipal renewal.
- The objective of this report **is not** to produce the ***'blueprints'*** for renewal. Producing the ***'blueprints'*** for municipal renewal is the role and responsibility of local and provincial governments and the communities they serve through various decision-making processes. The Task Force's role and responsibility is to ensure that all stakeholders who will be involved in various renewal decision-making processes have a document that identifies many of the key issues and options that should be considered in producing those *'blueprints'*.

3. Bases of Report

- This report is based on a combination of issues, options, and potential directions for municipal renewal that emerged from the following:
  - Task Force's consultations with leaders and members of Northern communities on such matters;
  - Previous reports on Northern municipal governance and development on such matters; and
  - Task Force's thinking on such matters.

4. Contributions to Report

- This report is the product of the thoughts and efforts of many people in the Northern Administration District, and not merely those of the Task Force members.

- The Task Force sincerely appreciates the interest and commitment demonstrated during the review process by the following:
  - ratepayers and residents of various communities;
  - municipal governments and their officials;
  - various organizations and their officials;
  - various provincial government departments and their officials; and
  - various members of the media.

- Although the Task Force has had the privilege and responsibility of producing this report, it could not have done it without the strong and generous support and dedication of all the aforementioned people.

5. Historical Context of Report

- This report and any review and renewal initiatives that flow from it must be viewed within the broader historical context of municipal renewal in Northern Saskatchewan.
- The municipal system in Northern Saskatchewan has undergone several review and renewal initiatives over the years in response to the changing needs of northern communities and municipalities. The major review and renewal initiatives undertaken in the past five decades are listed below.

1940s - *The Northern Administration Act*, which was enacted in 1948, made the provincial Department of Natural Resources (DNR) responsible for the total administration of Northern Saskatchewan, including providing local government services, regulating community growth and undertaking resource management.

1950s - The larger population centres of La Ronge, Creighton, and Uranium City became self-governing municipalities, but were excluded from *The Northern Administration Act*.

1960s – *The Northern Administration Act* was amended to allow some local administration and input through the formation of Local Community Authorities and Local Advisory Councils. However, the province continued to provide many municipal services directly within the boundaries of northern communities.

1970s – The Department of Northern Saskatchewan (DNS) became responsible for delivering all services and programs to the northern part of the province, as well as supporting the development and strengthening of local governments.

The Northern Municipal Council (NMC) was created in 1973 and along with the DNS, provided advice and resources to the existing local governments in the north as well as providing administrative services to small communities without local councils.

1980s – The Department of Northern Saskatchewan undertakes extensive consultations with northern leaders to provide more autonomous and accountable local government. In 1980, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan prepared the *"Options 80"* paper which profiled six options for local government in Northern Saskatchewan which are profiled in summary form below:

Option 1: Retain existing (1980) local government structure under *The Northern Administration Act* and the Northern Municipal Council. That structure included four types of municipal governing or advisory entities: Urban Municipalities (UMs), Local Community Authorities (LCAs), the Northern Municipal Council (NMC), and Local Advisory Authorities (LACs).

Options 2: Elimination of the then existing (1980) Northern Municipal Council (NMC) and the addition of two types of municipalities (i.e., Local Councils & Hamlets) to the then existing (1980) local government structure.

- Local Councils were to be incorporated with limited powers to spend in performing their duties, but without taxing or borrowing authority.
- Hamlets were to have unincorporated status and their local councils would merely serve in an advisory capacity.

Option 3: One-tier regional municipal governments responsible for:

- 5 mandatory municipal functions; and
- 17 optional municipal functions at local and regional levels.

Option 4: Two-tier municipal-regional government comprised of:

- four regional county councils responsible for five mandatory functions (including health services and hospital facilities)
- four types of local municipal councils responsible for any or all of 17 optional other functions.

Option 5: Three-tier government, consisting of Option #4 plus a municipal advocacy association or council for the entire north.

- 4 regional county councils responsible for 5 mandatory functions (including health services and hospital facilities);
- 4 types of local municipal councils responsible for any or all of 17 optional other functions; and
- 1 Northern Council responsible for political advocacy consisting of one councillor from each regional county council and one from each of the local municipal councils.

Option 6: Two-tier municipal government consisting of:

- Four regional councils elected at large, but responsible only for planning and zoning for their particular region and all the municipal districts therein.
- Several district/county governments existing within each of the four regions that would be responsible for all other mandatory and optional municipal functions (as well education, health services, and hospital facilities).

1983 - *The Northern Municipalities Act* was passed by the Saskatchewan Legislature establishing the current system of northern municipalities and municipal government in Northern Saskatchewan.

1986– The Local Government Finance Commission produced its Final Report which included as short section on Northern Saskatchewan. The 'Issues' profiled and the 'Conclusions' reached by the Commission on the municipal System in Northern Saskatchewan are worth noting here verbatim because they continue to have substantial relevance today.

ISSUES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE COMMISSION

- There are a number of issues that are either specific to Northern Saskatchewan or which impact more particularly on that particularly on that area of the province.

Limited Local Tax Base

- Northern municipalities with populations of 500 or more have roughly half the assessment base on a per capita basis in comparison with their southern counterparts of the same population. In the smaller communities, the per capita assessment base averages only about 20% of their southern counterparts of similar size.

Unemployment

- The high levels of unemployment are an extremely serious issue for northern residents and it has implications for their local governments. Northern local governments have modest tax bases to begin with, but the low levels of employment mean there is less assurance that much of the taxation which is levied can be collected.

Role of Municipal Government

- The serious social problems, many of which arise from unemployment, cause many northern municipal governments to perceive their roles as extending well beyond the roles played by most southern municipalities. It became apparent to the Commission during its brief visit to the north that northern municipalities see themselves as the main vehicle through which economic development is initiated and controlled in the interests of the local people.

Higher Costs in the North

- Costs are higher in the northern centres, due largely to their vast distances from major population centres and the consequent costs of transportation. For certain communities much of the supplies must be flown in.

CONCLUSIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE COMMISSION

- The question of the boundaries of municipalities, the role of municipal governments in economic development, the related issue of local taxation of resource revenues, and the role of municipalities in dealing with the acute social problems of the north are not within the terms of the Commission. Even if there had been some "stretching of the boundaries of the Commission's mandate, to adequately address those issues would have been beyond the resources of the Commission and its expertise.

- An overall evaluation of the municipal sector, particularly with regard to their role, was far more difficult for the Commission. Whether municipal governments should have a broader role in being the engines of economic growth and development in the north is a serious question. How municipalities with a broader role would be financed and. specifically, whether they should have a form of access to royalties or other revenues from resource development are also important questions.

- The Commission originally planned to address at least some of these broader questions but, subsequently, came to the conclusion that they were either beyond its mandate or outside its competency to adequately address. A mechanism, other than this particular Commission, with greater familiarity with northern issues, representation from northern residents, and the ability to concentrate on unique northern issues, free of the burdens of having to review the many other issues of major importance faced by this Commission, would be appropriate.

- The Commission was deeply impressed by the seriousness of economic and social conditions of the North, and believes that processes and mechanisms other than this particular Commission are required to address them."

1998– The Task Force on Municipal Legislative Renewal was established to undertake a review and make recommendations on the municipal system in Saskatchewan, including in the Northern Administration District.

- This report is the Task Force's contribution to the review on the need for and nature of municipal renewal identified by the Local Government Finance Commission. Although the Task Force addresses some of the key issues that were profiled by the Commission, more needs to be done.

- Although this report provides a potentially useful framework for continuing the review and the renewal, other mechanisms and processes will have to be established to act on this framework. This report is not the end of the review and renewal process, but the beginning of another important episode in the evolution and development of the municipal system in Northern Saskatchewan.

- The Task Force echoes the views of the Local Government Finance Commission that additional processes and mechanisms are required to achieve the requisite municipal renewal in Northern Saskatchewan. Such processes and mechanisms must be well structured and adequately staffed both at the municipal and provincial levels. Special efforts may be required on everyone's part to ensure that the municipal sector has the capacity to engage in a substantial renewal initiative.

6. Vision for Renewal

- This report is based on the following vision of municipal governance in the 21st century.

Continuing Importance of Municipal Governments for High Quality Service, Development and Life

"In the 21st century municipal governance will continue to be of fundamental importance for creating and sustaining vital, vibrant, and viable communities and in providing their members with a high quality of service, a high quality of development, and a high quality of life."

7. Goal for Renewal

Address Challenges and Problems Facing Northern Municipal Governments

- The central goal of municipal renewal in Northern Saskatchewan is to address the challenges and problems facing northern municipal governments to ensure that they can deal effectively, efficiently, and equitably with challenges and problems facing northern communities.

Improved Capacities

- In keeping with that goal the objectives of municipal renewal are to consider ways to achieve the following objectives:

  - Improve municipal financial capacity;
  - Improve municipal governance and management capacity;
  - Improve municipal planning and development capacity;
  - Improve municipal infrastructure and services capacity; and
  - Improve municipal inter-governmental coordination capacity.

Communities Have Needs

- It is important to underscore at the outset that communities have continuing needs that create crucial consequences for their members both individually and collectively.

Needs of Communities Must be Paramount

- Some of the needs of communities in Northern Saskatchewan must be addressed regardless of the extent to which the needs of municipal governments are addressed. Although it is important to meet the needs of municipal governments so that they can better meet the needs of their communities, meeting the needs of communities should not be subordinated to meeting the needs of municipal governments.

Both Municipal and Provincial Governments Must Devote Attention and Resources to Needs of Communities

- Both municipal and provincial governments must continue to weigh the degree of attention and resources that should be devoted to meeting the needs of communities versus meeting the needs of municipal governments. While the two sets of needs are interrelated, they are not one and the same and should not be treated as such.

People First -- Governments Second

- In summary, the needs of communities and the people that comprise them must be first and foremost; the needs of governments should be second and subordinate.

8. Requirements for Renewal

- There are at least ten major requirements for renewal.

Renewal Plan

(a) Municipal Renewal Plan

- First, a comprehensive and detailed municipal renewal plan is required.
- Such a plan should deal with various facets of the renewal process including, but not limited to, the following:
  - The major stages for renewal and what is to be achieved at each stage.
  - The major parts or elements of the municipal system that will be reviewed and renewed.
  - The goals and objectives that will guide the review and renewal of each of those parts or elements of the system.
  - The means by which each part or element of the system will be reviewed and renewed.
  - The timeframes for reviewing and renewing each part or element of the system.
- For that purpose the municipal and provincial officials should consider establishing a formal municipal renewal process for the Northern municipal sector comparable to the one that has been initiated for the Rural and Urban municipal sectors by the Roundtable consisting of SARM, SUMA and provincial representatives. Ideally, the discussions on renewal for the Northern Sector should take place in a separate forum and should have sufficient organizational resources devoted to it both from the municipal and provincial governments to ensure that both the review and any renewal is effective.

(b) Renewal Must be a Priority

Priority

- Second, renewal must become a priority for everyone. At the very least it must become a priority both for provincial and municipal governments. However, renewal also requires active involvement by members of the general public. Their involvement is essential to ensure their needs and preferences influence the directions of renewal. This is not an issue just between provincial and municipal governments. Everyone has a stake.
- For renewal to become a priority it requires that everyone understand that municipal governments are important for more than the delivery of a few basic municipal services (roads, water, sewer, etc). They are equally, if not more important, in fostering and facilitating development and quality of life in their communities.

(c) Focus on Public Interest

Public Interest

- Third, renewal requires that all stakeholders and members of the public focus on the public interest. The public interest must be paramount; organizational, personal, parochial, and partisan interests should not become impediments or obstacles to municipal renewal.

(d) Effective Leadership

Leadership

- Fourth, successful renewal requires effective leadership. Such leadership must come from several places including: municipal elected and appointed officials; provincial elected and appointed officials; members of the 'for-profit' and 'non-profit' sectors; members of unions, and other influential members of local and regional various communities. Indeed, it requires leadership on the part of ratepayers and residents in every community in this province.

(e) Bold Initiatives and Bold Compromises

Bold Initiatives & Compromises

- Fifth, renewal requires bold initiatives and compromises on the part of all stakeholders. Bold initiatives and bold compromises are absolutely essential to achieve the type of renewal that many want and Saskatchewan's local, regional, and provincial communities and economies need.

(f) Understanding the Context of Municipal Governance

Understanding Operational Context of Municipal Government

- Sixth, renewal also requires an understanding that municipal governments operate in an economic, social, and intergovernmental context that is substantially different than when the municipal system was first established. The sizes of the economic and social communities are significantly different today than they have been in the past, and they will likely become increasingly more different in the future.

- Similarly, the intergovernmental context of today is very different from what existed when the municipal system was first established. The nature of municipal-provincial relations and the respective roles and responsibilities of municipal, provincial, federal, and Aboriginal governments have and continue to experience substantial changes over time.

- An understanding of the economic, social, and intergovernmental contexts leads to a better appreciation not only regarding the need for renewal, but also for the nature of renewal.

(g) Renewal of Provincial and Local Sectors

Renewal of Provincial & Local Sectors

- Seventh, to ensure that renewal in the municipal sector is successful requires renewal in the provincial government sector. This is particularly important in those elements of the provincial government sector that have a direct and significant effect on the municipal sector This includes those elements that deal with key matters such as economic development, highways, and the environment.
- As well, it is necessary to renew the local non-municipal government sector to ensure that there is an optimal structural and functional alignment with the municipal sector.

(h) Appropriate Governmental Policies and Programs

Appropriate Policies and Programs

- Eighth, to ensure that municipal renewal is successful it is important, indeed imperative, that the policy and program frameworks of the municipal, provincial, federal governments foster and facilitate various types of development.

(i) Appropriate Balance of Local and Regional Governance

Appropriate Balance of Local and Regional Governance

- Ninth, to ensure that renewal is successful requires an appropriate balance between local and regional municipal governance. Local and regional forms of governance exist now and always will. The challenge will be to find both the appropriate forms and the appropriate balance between the two for different purposes, in different places, at different points in time.

(j) Appropriate Approaches

Appropriate Approaches

- Tenth, renewal requires appropriate approaches guided by appropriate principles.

- The Task Force suggests that the most appropriate approaches should be used to ensure that the goals of municipal renewal are accomplished. Moreover, the Task Force suggests that careful consideration be given to the nature and degree of consultations, negotiations, and directions that are required on everyone's part to ensure that the requisite municipal renewal is achieved for the benefit of local, regional, and provincial communities and economies.

Fundamental Principles Regarding Approaches

- Any approach used for renewing municipal system should be guided by five fundamental principles:

Positive & Proactive Leadership

(a) Positive & Proactive Leadership

- The process should be led and directed in a positive and proactive manner by not only by the municipal and provincial governments, but also by ratepayers and residents.

Transparency

(b) Transparency

- The process should be highly transparent. It should be designed in a way that everyone understands the nature of the decisions that must be made, the decision- making sites, who the decision-makers are, and ultimately, the nature of the decisions made.

Openness

(c) Openness

- The process should be very open. Everyone should have an opportunity to express views either in writing or orally on any proposed renewal.

Advance Notice

(d) Advance Notice

- The process should include advance notice of any significant initiative for renewal.

Adequate Consultations

(e) Adequate Consultations

- The process should include adequate consultations on any significant initiative for renewal.

PART TWO:
NEED FOR MUNICIPAL RENEWAL

Why is Municipal Renewal Needed?

- There is a need for municipal renewal in Northern Saskatchewan because it is difficult for the existing municipal system to respond to the following matters:
  - The current and future factors and trends affecting northern communities;
  - The current and future needs of northern communities; and
  - The current and future needs of northern municipal governments.

- This section briefly outlines those factors, trends, and needs as well as their effects on the current municipal system in Northern Saskatchewan.

1. FACTORS AND TRENDS AFFECTING NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

What are the Factors and Trends Affecting Communities?

- Northern communities are being affected by a combination of social, economic, demographic and physical factors and trends.

- It is important to note that many of the factors and trends outlined below are not necessarily problems for all communities and municipalities in Northern Saskatchewan.

- Indeed some of the factors and trends listed are not problems at all, but rather are strengths and opportunities that need to be managed.

- It is also important to note that these factors and trends affect not only northern communities and municipalities, but also the individuals, businesses, and organizations that exist within them.

1.1 Geographic Factors and Trends

Northern Saskatchewan constitutes about 50% of province's total area

- Northern Saskatchewan covers approximately half of the geographic area of the province of Saskatchewan. The boundaries are defined by legislation and correspond to the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District. (See Appendix 1.1: Locations and Communities)

- Although Northern Saskatchewan represents half of the geographic area of the province, it contains only 3% of the province's population. The total population of Northern Saskatchewan was approximately 31,100 according to the 1996 Census and it is estimated at 36,000 at present (2000).

- There are over 70 communities in Northern Saskatchewan, many of which are relatively isolated and have populations under 200 people.

- 35 communities are designated either as municipalities or quasi-municipalities, many of which have a large percentage of Metis and First Nations people.

- There are more than twenty First Nations reserves and communities.

- There are more than 12 small communities known as recreational subdivisions. (See Appendix 1.2: Population of Communities and Municipal Governments).

1.2 Demographic Factors and Trends

Significant Population Growth

- The population of Northern Saskatchewan and most northern communities is increasing at a very high rate compared to the rest of the province, impacting infrastructure and service delivery in many communities.

- Since the 1940's, the population of Northern Saskatchewan has tripled from approximately 11,000 to almost 36,000. (See Appendix 1.3 for Population Growth Statistics in Northern Saskatchewan).

- Northern Saskatchewan's population is now increasing at an annual rate approaching five percent. If the Saskatchewan population increased by a comparable rate, the Provincial population would grow by about 50,000 persons annually.

- Some individual communities in Northern Saskatchewan have seen their populations increase by almost 50% since 1991. (See Appendix 1.4 for Population Growth Statistics in Northern Communities).

Distinct Population Mix

- The population of Northern Saskatchewan is predominantly of Aboriginal ancestry. Eighty-five percent of the residents of Northern Saskatchewan are either Metis or First Nations, and many northern communities have populations that consist entirely of Metis or First Nations people.

- The population of Northern Saskatchewan is also significantly younger than the rest of the Province, with over one-third being under the age of 15 and several communities having between 40-50% of their populations under the age of 15. (See Appendix 1.5 Socio-Economic Characteristics).

- The composition and demographics of Northern Saskatchewan's population poses both opportunities and challenges for municipal governance in terms of ensuring cultural representation and leadership, and building current and future organizational and human resource capacity.

1.3 Educational Factors and Trends

Lower Educational Levels

- Average ducation levels are lower among Northerners. 30% of Northerners have completed less than Grade 9, 64% have completed less than Grade 12, and only 11% have received a post-secondary diploma or certificate, in contrast to provincial averages of 13%, 43%, and 17%, respectively. (See Appendix 1.5)

- The relatively lower levels of education in Northern Saskatchewan create challenges to building organizational and human resource capacity among Northerners not only in the local government sector, but also, in all areas of employment, business and economic development.

1.4 Labour Market Factors and Trends

Surplus Labour Force

- Northern Saskatchewan has a surplus labour force. Unless various economic development initiatives succeed, the size of the surplus labour force could increase substantially in the future as a result of the relatively young age of the population in northern communities. (See Appendix 1.5).

- Average unemployment in Northern Saskatchewan is consistently greater than 20% compared to the provincial average that is consistently below 7%. I n some communities the unemployment rate approaches 100%. (See Appendix 1.5).

- Those factors and trends make training, economic development, self-employment, and business development very important issues for all northern communities and municipalities.

1.5 Socio-Economic Factors and Trends

Variance in Income Levels

- Income levels among Northerners vary from community to community. Some communities have stronger economic bases with more employment opportunities in mining, forestry, retail, and the public sectors than other communities.

High Poverty Rates

- The lack of adequate full time employment opportunities for all those of working age contributes both to the relatively high unemployment and poverty levels. According to government statistics 53% of northern families have incomes that place them below the poverty line. (See Appendix 1.5).

Lack of Employment Opportunities Coupled with an Increasing Population

- The inadequate level of employment opportunities coupled with the large percentage of a working age population results in significant unemployment and under-employment among many Northerners. The job shortages and the relatively average income levels affect the level of both commercial and residential property developments in northern communities. These factors hamper the ability of municipal governments to generate their own revenues through property taxes, levies, user charges, and fees. In turn, this limits the ability of municipal governments to provide the needed municipal infrastructure and services.

- Another consequence of these socio-economic conditions is that northern municipal governments are being asked and constrained to expand their roles and responsibilities for meeting the needs of residents in their communities. Northern municipalities are being seen as an increasingly important governing entity for addressing social and economic problems and challenges faced by members of their communities.

Lack of Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities

- Municipal governments feel limited both by the statutory framework and the financial framework in meeting the needs of residents in their communities. Representatives of northern municipal governments have indicated that it is important not only to clarify and possibly even to expand their roles and responsibilities, but also to provide them with the corresponding powers and finances needed to address the needs of their communities.

2. NEEDS OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

- In addition to the above social and economic factors and trends, there are several sets of needs that necessitate some municipal renewal in Northern Saskatchewan.

- The needs of northern communities, outlined below, have been identified by leaders and members of northern municipalities and communities during various consultation initiatives undertaken by the Task Force. This includes various meetings with members of New North, members of SUMA's Northern Sector group, and in the Task Force's Community Forums on Municipal Renewal in Northern Saskatchewan undertaken in ten northern communities during May 2000. These needs have also been identified in various reports on community, economic, and infrastructure planning and development in the North that have been produced by the provincial government and others in recent years.

2.1 Infrastructure Needs

Insufficient Water and Sewer Systems

- Northern municipalities have some major infrastructure and service needs. These needs represent some of the most pressing and commonly cited needs for northern communities.

(a) Water and Sewer Needs

- Many communities, including some of the 35 larger organized communities (i.e., municipalities), do not have adequate water and sewer services to serve their growing populations. This is particularly true of the smaller unorganized communities.

- Only the larger communities have storm sewer systems. Many of the smaller communities do not have ditch and culvert systems for dealing with the accumulation of water from rain and melting snow. The accumulation of such water can have a significant effect on the health, safety, and quality of life for residents in northern communities.

- The plan for installing or improving such infrastructure in the near future is an important step in the right direction. However, both the provincial government and northern municipal governments must ensure that the governance and management capacity, including the requisite financial resources, to address the ongoing water and sewer needs of northern municipalities.

(b) Waste Management Needs

Insufficient Waste Management Programs and Facilities

- Many Northern Municipalities also have waste management needs. This includes the management regarding the disposal of two major categories of waste: garbage collection and sewage treatment.

- In the case of garbage, many municipalities need garbage disposal sites that are more appropriately planned, managed and operated so as to minimize problems of environmental safety, health safety, and personal injury safety.

(c) Transportation Needs

- Northern communities have two major transportation needs. Such transportation needs involve both community roads and connecting roads.

Insufficient Community Roads

- First, many of the local roads in various northern communities are substandard to the point where they constitute obstacles to the quality of life, and in some instances, impose some various safety risks on residents of these communities. Only the residents of larger centres (e.g., La Ronge) have access to paved roads and sidewalks.

Insufficient Connecting Roads

- Second, some of the major roads or highways leading to various northern communities are substandard to the point where they constitute major safety risks. Many northern communities do not have all-weather road access, or road access at all, linking them to other communities in the north or those in the South. Such roads are crucial for ensuring access to medical services for most Northerners. May individuals attempting to access health, emergency, and educational services must do so either by driving and others are constrained to do so by air travel.

2.2 Housing Needs

Insufficient and Inadequate Housing

- Many communities are also faced with housing needs. Lack of adequate housing and overcrowding are endemic throughout the North. Census information shows that in Northern Saskatchewan, a five-room house will, on average, have eight occupants. The provincial average occupancy for a five-room house is one person. More than 2000 new homes would have to be constructed in the North within the next five years to accommodate its rapidly growing population. (See Appendix 1.5: Socio-Economic Characteristics).

2.3 Community Services Needs

Insufficient Recreation and Leisure Programs and Facilities

- Many northern municipalities have community service needs. Whereas some communities have adequate recreation and leisure facilities for all ages others do not. Both the communities that have such facilities and programs and those that do not are faced with the constant pressures a shortages of financial and human resources to maintain or develop their facilities and programs to meet community services needs.

Insufficient Family Support Services

- Similarly, whereas some communities have adequate family support services (e.g., day care, family counselling, programs and services for older people, etc.) as well as some other community or social services, others do not. Both the communities that have such support services and those that do not are faced with the constant pressures of coping with shortages of financial and human resources to develop and maintain.

3. NEEDS OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

Lack of Financial Independence

- Another factor that contributes to the need for municipal renewal is the needs of municipal governments. This includes four major sets of needs:
  - Financial Resources Needs;
  - Human Resources Needs; and
  - Jurisdictional Resources Needs
- These are discussed, in turn, below.

3.1 Financial Resources Needs

Limited access to Financial Resources

- Most, if not all, northern municipalities face major problems in accessing adequate financial resources to meet their basic needs both in the operational and capital budgets. The result is that many northern municipalities have to make major compromises on the level of municipal infrastructure, municipal services, municipal staffing.

- The financial resource needs stem from several related factors, including:
  - Small population bases;
  - Small commercial and industrial sector; and
  - Small municipal land holdings.

- Some of the most substantial economic activity in the North takes place outside municipal boundaries. Almost all land in Northern Saskatchewan is Provincial Crown land that is management by Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM). A portion of proceeds from the disposition of Crown lands and a portion of provincial revenues from resource developments are held in the Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account (NRSTA) and is then distributed among northern communities to assist them in meeting their operating and capital requirements. Most municipalities are heavily dependent both on such grants, as well as other grants from the provincial General Revenue Fund to cover their basic operating expenses. (See Appendix 3.2: for Northern Municipal Functions by Expenditure).

- Northern municipalities and communities are also heavily dependent on such grants for capital works such as subdivision development, docks and marinas, housing, water and sewer, roads and streets, lighting, recreation facilities, schools. A major reason often cited by Northerners for their dependence on provincial grants is that they do not have direct access to revenue generating activities that take place outside their boundaries on provincial Crown lands either through taxation or licensing.

- The lack of direct access to a significant commercial or industrial tax base, coupled with high poverty rates, generally means that many northern municipalities, even after taking into account its share of NRSTA funds, are inadequately funded to do much more than meet its very basic operating costs.

- In short, the lack of sufficient financial resources constrains Northern municipalities to operate at a nominal level, rather than at an optimal level. Their limited financial capacity limits what they can do and how well they can do it.

3.2 Human Resources Needs

Difficulties in Attracting and Maintaining Qualified Professionals

- Many northern municipalities also have human resource needs. Many of them have difficulty attracting and retaining professionals with the requisite skills to meet their municipal management, planning and development, and service delivery needs. This is due to a combination of factors, not the least of which are issues related to the isolation of many municipalities and the shortage of financial resources needed to attract and retain them.

- The result of a shortage of such professionals within many local communities often produces a high degree of transience among providers of key municipal, social, community and public services and programs. This, in turn, produces a lack of continuity in the provision and delivery of these services and programs.

- The lack of easy and continuous access to professionals with skills in municipal management as well as planning and development (i.e., infrastructure, land-use, economic, community, etc.) makes it very difficult for municipal governments to explore and exploit the various development opportunities that are so crucial for the current and future state of their communities.

Difficulty in Producing Land-Use and Community Development Plans

- The shortage of human resources is evident in the fact that few communities have up to date community or land use development plans and there are few community-based planning and development committees. The reliance on planning and development support services provided by a few officials within the provincial department of Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing (MACH) together with the waiting period for approval of community subdivision plans from the department of SERM produces backlogs, delays, and missed opportunities.

- The human and financial resources that have been devoted to community and regional economic development authorities in recent years constitute an important step in the right direction in terms of economic planning and development. Nevertheless, even that system may need more human resources than it has had at its disposal to date. Moreover, in order for that system to operate at an optimal level, it requires a certain degree of both management and planning and development capacity within individual communities and municipalities.

- The availability of human resources is closely tied to the availability of financial resources. The limited amount of both presents a major obstacle to the planning and development initiatives of northern communities.

- Increased authority and autonomy over municipal and community affairs will do little to help Northern municipalities in meeting the needs of their communities without the requisite human and financial resources.

3. Jurisdictional Resources Needs

Jurisdictional Differences among Municipalities and Quasi-Municipalities

- Municipal governments in the north have jurisdictional resources needs. The jurisdictional resources of northern municipal governments vary considerably among various types of incorporated municipal entities and unincorporated quasi-municipal entities.

- Despite the differences among them, however, it is generally felt that all incorporated and unincorporated municipal and quasi-municipal entities have insufficient jurisdictional authority to deal with various matters affecting them.

Increased Authority and Autonomy accompanying Clarified Roles and Responsibilities

- Northern municipal governments have indicated that in order to deal with the unique problems, challenges, needs and opportunities in their communities, they need municipal legislation that provides them with the necessary jurisdictional resources. Toward that end, they have indicated a desire for the provincial government to enact municipal legislation that will do the following:
  - Clarify their existing jurisdictional roles and responsibilities; and
  - Increase their jurisdictional authority and autonomy.

- Northern communities and municipalities have lobbied for greater power and control over matters inside and outside their boundaries, especially in economic and community development, resources management, and the environmental matters.

Summary and Rationale for Renewal

Status Quo is not Best Option

- In summary, there is a clear and pressing need for municipal renewal in northern Saskatchewan. There is a need to renew the municipal system in Northern Saskatchewan and there are some very important reasons for doing so. The status quo is not the best option for the future of northern communities and economies in Saskatchewan in the 21st century.

Basis of Need for Renewal

- The need for municipal renewal in Northern Saskatchewan stems from the following needs in light of various factors and trends affecting northern communities and economies:
  1. The needs of northern communities; and
  2. The needs of northern municipal governments.

Needs of Communities must take precedence over needs of municipalities.

- It is important to underscore what is generally understood and accepted. Although the needs of municipalities are important, the needs of their communities and the members who comprise them are even more important. The municipal renewal initiative should not become an obstacle for dealing with the pressing needs of Northern communities. In short, the needs of communities and the people that comprise them must continue to be the principal priority both for the municipal and provincial governments.

PART THREE:
VIEWS OF NORTHERNERS ON MUNICIPAL RENEWAL

INTRODUCTION

- The principal objective in this part of the Report is to profile the views of Northerners regarding the need for and nature of renewal. It does so by focusing primarily on two sets of needs that Northerners spoke to on several occasions with the Task Force:
  - The needs of Northern municipal governments; and
  - The needs of Northern communities.

- Although the principal focus of this Report is on the views of Northerners on the need and nature or renewal and the needs of northern municipal governments and communities, it also sheds some light on what they see as the rights or entitlements of northern communities and municipal governments.

- These views have been compiled from a number of consultations the Task Force has undertaken with leaders and members of Northern communities and municipalities including:

  - **New North Meetings:**
    - October 24, 1998– Prince Albert
    - January 15,1999 Prince Albert
    - June 16, 2000 – Prince Albert

  - **SUMA Northern Sector Meetings**:
    - February 1, 1999 – Saskatoon
    - May 4, 1999 – La Ronge
    - January 31, 2000 – Regina

  - **Northern Community Forums**:
    - Spring 2000 – La Loche, Buffalo Narrows, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Beauval, La Ronge, Sandy Bay, Denare Beach, Creighton, Cumberland House, and Stony Rapids.

  - **Questionnaires to Northern Municipalities:**
    - Fall 1999 Questionnaires
    - Spring 2000 Questionnaires

1. Views on Needs of Northern Municipal Governments

1.1 Views on Financial Needs

- *Northern municipalities need a guaranteed financial base to provide for present and future services.*

- *More financial resources are needed for northern municipalities to be able to afford:*
  - *Better planning & development;*
  - *Better infrastructure; and*
  - *Better social & community services.*

- *More financial resources are needed to ensure effectiveness.*

- *Northern municipalities need broader tax bases, which they can control.*

- *Building economic capacity is crucial for the North in order to ensure that it does not become heavily dependent on financial support from the South.*

- *There are too few properties on which to base taxes in northern communities. Even if there were a broader tax base, there would be insufficient revenues to cover the costs of municipal government.*

- *The nature and volume of revenue sources going into the NRSTA, and the distribution of these revenues, are not living up to the 'spirit' of the NRSTA and need to be examined.*

- *All revenues from natural resources and Crown Lands in the North should go into the NRSTA for transfer to northern communities.*

- *Provincial grants and transfers should be unconditional rather than conditional; and should recognize the service differences between northern municipalities and their southern counterparts.*

- *Population based government transfers based are inadequate.*

- *A 'northern municipal infrastructure fund' is needed.*

- *The problems and challenges associated with the collection and enforcement of taxes in northern communities need to be addressed.*

1.2 Views on Human Resource Needs

- *Several Northern municipalities' face challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified administrators.*
- *There is a need to establish training and education programs for administrators and clerks in northern municipalities who lack the necessary expertise to deal with a variety of municipal issues.*
- *There is a need for more permanent and less transient staffing in order to ensure continuity and community development.*
- *Municipal officials – elected and appointed – must be locally based agents and advocates for their communities.*
- *Training programs are offered too far away for most northern residents.*
- *There are insufficient financial and human resources to satisfy the training needs of northern municipal staff.*
- *Municipal councils need training on municipal legislation and provincial policies, programs, personnel, and approvals.*
- *The lack of management development contributes to the problems that northern municipalities have in dealing with the different provincial and federal departments and jurisdictions that oversee various northern activities.*
- *There are too many boards and too few people to sit on these boards – Representative Area Networks, Area Transportation Planning Committees, Environmental Quality Committees, Community Policing Boards, Land Use Planning Committees, etc.*
- *Local, regional and northern agencies, boards and commissions (including those for policing, justice, environment, New North etc.) need human and financial resources to operate effectively.*
- *There is a need for improving municipal advisory services regarding highly technical issues to help administrators and Councils make decisions in areas in which they lack the necessary technical expertise and educational background.*
- *Municipal advisors are stretched too thin and are unable to spend enough time in northern communities.*
- *Provincial officials working for various agencies need to provide better working relationships with municipal councils.*
- *There is a need to establish a common pool of expertise among First Nation communities and northern municipalities in areas such as engineering, management and planning to deal with common service needs and issues of common concern.*

1.3 Views on Jurisdictional Needs

Increased Authority and Autonomy

- *Northern communities want and need more authority in running their own affairs.*

Increased Agreement powers

- *The interests of northern people would be better served if northern people were more involved in decisions regarding critical functions such as housing, health, policing, etc.*

Increased Powers for Various Functions

- *Northern municipalities need more powers to deal with local issues (such as dangerous dogs, planning and subdivision development).*

Powers for agreements

- *Northern municipalities need more powers to facilitate entering into agreements with other communities to deal with issues of common concern.*
- *Northern municipal councils are very interested in having more power and authority over a range of functions (e.g., education, housing, social & community services, and economic development) that are not currently within the municipal sector, including those functions that differ from their southern counterparts.*

Increased Powers for Developments Adjacent to Municipalities

- *Northern municipalities need more influence over developments occurring outside their boundaries.*

More power in intergovernmental cooperation and coordination

- *There needs to be greater intergovernmental cooperation and coordination (i.e., municipal, provincial, federal, and Aboriginal) in management, planning and development and service provision.*
- *Municipal-Aboriginal relationships (First Nations & Metis Nation) need to be strengthened.*

Powers to Establish Regional Governance

- *Northern communities may need regional or northern governance and organizational structures that can better utilize federal and provincial government initiatives and funding.*

Reduction in Provincial Approvals

- *There needs to be a reduction in the number and types of provincial government approvals over municipal bylaws.*

Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities

- *The roles and responsibilities of the various councils and committees operating in the North need to be clarified.*

Increased Decision-Making Powers for Committees

- *Northern advisory committees (such as those for northern settlements, co-management and environmental quality committees) should have decision-making abilities and could be given a management function.*

Clarification of Legislation and Regulations

- *Northern municipal legislation and regulations need to be simplified and clarified. Northern municipalities should be under the jurisdiction of northern municipal act for practical and symbolic purposes.*

Right to Participate in Municipal Renewal

- *Northern municipal leaders need and want a provincial-municipal negotiating process to deal with municipal renewal.*
- *Northerners need to be consulted and given ample time to determine what changes are required and how best to implement such changes.*

1.4 Views on Other Municipal Government Needs

Reviewing Alignment of Statutory Frameworks

- *The variation in governance and management systems among northern municipalities operating under the same Act needs to be addressed.*

Conflict of Interest

- *Conflict of interest provisions need to be examined and strengthened given the extended nature of families in northern municipalities that have a relatively small population.*

Clarification of Democratic Rights

- *Voting and representation criteria regarding First Nations and Metis persons living both in and outside municipal boundaries need to be addressed.*

Insurance and Compensation for Officials

- *There is a need to provide insurance and compensation for councillors travelling on behalf of their communities, given the risks of travelling in the North.*

Resolving Land Claims

- *Land issues need to be resolved (i.e., First Nation Treaty Rights and Metis Nation Land Claims) because they are important in themselves and because they have implications both for current and future boundaries of municipalities and also for the relationships of municipal governments and neighbouring governments (i.e., municipal and Aboriginal).*

Clarifying Boundaries

- *Boundary issues between neighbouring northern municipalities and First Nation reserves need to be addressed.*

Consolidation of Provincial Sector

- *More consolidation in the provincial sector is needed. There is too much fragmentation at the provincial level.*

Improved Organizational Capacity of Municipal Associations

- *Municipal associations require the sufficient financial and human resources to be effective advocates and agents of municipal needs and preferences.*

2. Views on Needs of Northern Communities

2.1 Views on Infrastructure Needs

Improving Infrastructure

- *Improving municipal infrastructure is the highest priority in northern communities.*

Improving Services

- *There is a need for basic services in many northern communities; services that are taken for granted in southern communities (clean water and its distribution, sewage treatment, safe roads, etc.).*

Improved Management of Infrastructure

- *Water, sewer, and waste management services in northern communities need to be improved.*

Improved Natural Gas Infrastructure

- *Natural gas is not accessible in northern communities, yet northern peoples pay an energy surcharge.*

Improved transportation Infrastructure

- *Transportation infrastructure – roads, air service, is often inadequate or unsafe—yet it is crucial for health, education and economic development.*

Improved Fiscal Capacity for Infrastructure

- *Greater fiscal capacity is needed for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of community infrastructure and services.*

Northern Municipal Infrastructure Fund'

- *A 'northern municipal infrastructure fund' is needed.*

Infrastructure in North Lags Behind Infrastructure in South

- *Northern communities started out from a greatly underdeveloped position regarding basic infrastructure and services compared to southern communities, and are continually trying to 'catch up.' Infrastructure funding does not reflect this position.*

Infrastructure Important for Healthy and Wealthy Communities

- *Improved infrastructure is important for improving the health, well being, quality of life, stability, and economic development of northern communities.*

2.2 Views on Community Service Needs

- *The social/community service provision system is too fragmented.*
- *Social and community service providers need to be able to concentrate on the particular needs of each community on a full time basis.*
- *There is a shortage of permanent, non-transient social and community service providers; elected and appointed municipal officials have to do too much.*
- *Northern communities may be interested in having a greater role in providing social and community services and in having a regional or northern organization undertake federal and provincial social and community service initiatives.*
- *Social and recreational services and programs in northern communities need to be improved.*
- *Housing, policing, and fire protection shortages need to be addressed in many northern communities.*

2.3 Views on Economic Development Needs

Increased Municipal Role in Economic Development

- *Northern municipalities play an important role in stimulating economic development in their communities.*
- *Northern communities and municipalities need to play a greater role in spurring economic activity and economic development of Northern Saskatchewan.*
- *The economic development function is important for northern communities and needs to be improved and made more accountable.*

Greater Local Control Over Economic Activity

- *There is a need for more local control and influence over land, timber, mining, and other economic development activities occurring outside municipal boundaries.*

Joint Economic Planning and Development

- *Joint management committees between municipal and Aboriginal governments are needed for such things as planning and development.*

2.4 Views on Other Community Needs

Improved Community Capacity Building

- *There is a need for more capacity building in communities That includes building the organizational, social, economic and infrastructure capacity – of communities.*

Improved community Consciousness Building

- *More community consciousness building–There is a need for more community development initiatives to promote a broader civic consciousness among people living in northern communities, municipalities, and reserves regarding their common needs and shared interests.*

Increased and Improved Training in Community Leadership and Management

- *There is a need for more training at all levels for all Northerners in various areas, including in the area of 'leadership and management in community building.'*

Improved Coordination Among Autonomous Entities

- *There is a need for some regional mechanisms to bring various autonomous entities together to discuss common issues and to enhance planning and development initiatives.*

CONCLUSION

- This part of the Report has profiled the views of Northerners on the need for and nature of municipal renewal, as well as on the needs of municipal governments and communities.
- It is important to note, however, that this part of the Report has also profiled the views of Northerners on the 'rights' or 'entitlements' of their communities and municipal governments to the following:
  - More land for local communities and municipalities;
  - More authority over the management of lands and resources adjacent to communities or municipalities; and
  - More financial resources derived from resource development in the North on lands outside officially designated local community or municipal boundaries.

PART FOUR:
LOCAL MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION

- This section of the report profiles issues, options, and potential directions related to the following facets of the local municipal governance system:

  - Municipal Legislation
  - Municipal Purpose
  - Municipal Functions
  - Municipal Authority and Autonomy
  - Municipal Status
  - Municipal Finances
  - Municipal Governance and Management
  - Municipal Processes
  - Municipal Classification
  - Municipal Incorporation

- The key issues, options, and potential directions are profiled in a relatively succinct manner. Anyone interested either in background material or comparative material on any of the facets of local municipal governance being profiled in this part of the report should refer to the corresponding part(s) of the Task Force's final report on the rural and urban municipal sectors titled *Options 2000: A Framework For Municipal Renewal in the Rural and Urban Sectors*.

I. MUNICIPAL LEGISLATION

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Should Northern municipalities be governed by separate and distinct municipal legislation, or should they be governed by municipal legislation that also applies to other municipal governments?*
- *Should legislation and any corresponding regulations related to Northern municipalities be consolidated?*
- *Should legislation for Northern municipalities be simplified and clarified?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

1. Core Municipal Legislation

- ☐ Separate legislation for Northern municipalities
- ☐ Legislation both for Northern and other municipalities

2. Related Municipal Legislation

- ☐ No change to related municipal legislation and regulations
- ☐ Consolidation of related municipal legislation and regulations with *The Northern Municipalities Act*
- ☐ Consolidation of related municipal legislation and regulations into one related northern municipal statute or set of regulations

3. Form Municipal Legislation

- ☐ No change to nature of current legislation
- ☐ Simplification and clarification of northern municipal legislation through:
  - Better Wording (e.g., plain language)
  - Better organization (e.g., index)
  - Better Formatting (e.g., shorter paragraphs, more spacing)

[C] DIRECTIONS

What are the Proposed Directions?

1. **Directions Regarding Core Municipal Legislation**

- **Consideration should be given to whether northern municipalities require a separate core municipal statute or whether they would be served equally well by a common core municipal statute that also applies to other municipalities.**
- **Consideration should be given to whether it is still necessary and appropriate to give some Northern municipalities (e.g., La Ronge and Creighton), but not others, the option of using some sections of *The Urban Municipalities Act* for governance and management purposes.**

2. **Directions Regarding Municipal Legislation**

- **Consideration should be given to consolidating various related municipal legislation and regulations that govern northern municipalities into one related northern municipal statute or set of regulations.**

3. **Directions Regarding Nature of Municipal Legislation**

- **Consideration should be given to simplifying and clarifying northern municipal legislation to make it more readable and understandable for residents, ratepayers, elected and appointed municipal officials, businesses and organizations, and other governments through, among other things:**
  - **Better wording (e.g., plain language);**
  - **Better organization (e.g., index); and**
  - **Better formatting (e.g., shorter paragraphs, more spacing).**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- The proposed directions regarding legislation for Northern municipalities are intended to encourage municipal and provincial officials to consider the appropriateness and adequacy of existing core and related municipal legislation.

- There are many assumptions regarding the adequacy and appropriateness of the existing core and related legislation for Northern municipalities. A particularly important assumption that needs to be explored in some detail is that Northern municipalities need separate and distinct legislation. Key questions to ask include the following:
  - 'What aspect of municipal governance in the northern sector is so different from municipal governance in the rural and urban sectors that would warrant a separate and distinct legislation'?
  - Would separate core legislation for Northern municipalities serve substantial practical purposes, rather than merely symbolic purposes?

II. MUNICIPAL PURPOSE

[A] ISSUES

What is at Issue?

- *What should be the nature and scope of the purposes of municipal governments?*
- *Should there be uniformity or variance in the purposes of municipal governments?*

[B] OPTIONS

What are the Options?

1. Options on Nature and Scope of Municipal Purpose

- ☐ Retain Current References to Municipal Purpose
- ☐ Incorporate New 'Municipal Purpose Statement'

2. Options on Uniformity or Variance on Municipal Purpose

- ☐ Uniformity in Purpose
- ☐ Variance in Purpose

[C] DIRECTIONS

What are the Proposed Directions?

- **Consideration should be give to developing a new "Municipal Purpose Statement' that is relatively clear and precise on two key matters:**
  - **The nature and scope of the fundamental purposes of all municipalities.**
  - **The key differences, if any, in the fundamental purposes of various forms or types of municipalities.**

- **Consideration should be given to producing a "Municipal Purpose Statement' that includes provisions and principles regarding the following types of matters:**
  - **Providing democratic governance and accountable public management;**
  - **Providing the governance, management, planning and development, and the delivery of public services within their boundaries that meets the needs and preferences of their respective ratepayers and residents;**
  - **Fostering economic, community, social, cultural and environmental development; and**
  - **Ensuring good quality of life for members of their communities.**

[D] RATIONALE

- The clarification of the fundamental purpose of municipal governments is an issue of interest and importance to leaders and members of northern communities. In reflecting on the functions that are actually performed, deemed to be performed, or should be performed by municipal governments, many participants in the Task Force's Northern consultations indicated either explicitly or implicitly that attention should be devoted to the nature and scope of the fundamental purpose of municipal governance.

- Many such participants indicated that the fundamental purpose of municipal governments should be quite broad in nature, and not limited to administering some limited municipal infrastructure and services.

III. MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *What, if any, changes are needed to the functions performed by municipalities and quasi-municipalities in Northern Saskatchewan?*

- *Should all types of Northern Municipal entities perform the same functions or should different types of Northern Municipal entities perform different functions?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

1. Options on Functional Alignment

- ❑ No Change to the Current Functional Alignment
- ❑ Add Functions to the Current Alignment
- ❑ Remove Functions from the Current Alignment
- ❑ Review the Current Alignment

2. Options on Uniformity or Variance of Functions

- ❑ Explicit Uniformity of Functions for all Municipal Entities
- ❑ Explicit Variance of Functions for Different Municipal Entities

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to undertaking a review of the functions that are currently performed by various northern municipal governments in an effort to ascertain both:**
  - **The degree of uniformity or variance in the functions that they actually perform; and**
  - **The degree of uniformity or variance in the functions that they should perform.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- A review of the functions that municipalities actually perform and the functions that they should perform is important for two purposes. First, it is important for making decisions regarding the appropriate alignment of functions between municipal governments and other governments and authorities. Second, it is important for considering the nature and scope of renewal to other elements of the municipal system.

- Many northern municipal officials who participated in the consultations indicated that they are constrained to perform more than just strictly 'municipal functions' for their ratepayers and residents because they are viewed as used as information and referral centre for various services provided by various other governments and authorities.

IV. MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY AND AUTONOMY

[A] ISSUES

What is at Issue?

- *Does the current municipal legislation provide adequate and appropriate authority and autonomy for northern municipalities to perform their functions in the next century?*

- *Should all types of northern municipalities and quasi-municipalities (e.g., hamlets, settlements) have the same degree of authority and autonomy?*

[B] OPTIONS

What are the Options?

1. Scope of Authority and Autonomy

- ☐ No change
- ☐ Increased Authority and Autonomy
  - Fewer provincial approvals
  - Broader spheres of municipal jurisdiction (e.g., nuisances, public safety issues, etc.)
- ☐ Decreased Authority and Autonomy

2. Uniformity or Variability of Autonomy and Authority

- ☐ Same Authority and Autonomy
- ☐ Variations in Authority and Autonomy

[C] DIRECTIONS

What are the Proposed Directions?

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing the degree of authority and autonomy that northern municipalities should exercise in performing their functions in the next century.**

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of developing legislation for northern municipalities that include the following:**
  - **Broader spheres of municipal jurisdiction (e.g., nuisances, public safety issues, etc.);**
  - **Broad corporate powers regarding inter-municipal and inter-governmental agreements; and**
  - **Natural person powers.**

- **Consideration should be given to whether all types of municipalities in Northern Saskatchewan should have the same degree of authority and autonomy.**

[D] RATIONALE

What is the Rationale?

- Reviewing the degree of authority and autonomy of northern municipalities and the means by which they can be increased or decreased is of interest and importance to northern municipal officials. Their interest in this issue is likely to increase even more if a review and renewal of authority and autonomy is undertaken for rural and urban municipalities.

V. MUNICIPAL STATUS

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Should the status of municipal governments be explicitly recognized?*
- *What status should municipal governments have within the overall system of governance in Saskatchewan?*
- *What instruments should be used to recognize the status of municipal governments?*
- *Should the status of municipal governments be uniform or variable?*
- *What principles should be embodied in any provisions on the status of municipal governments?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

1. Options on Recognition of Municipal Status

- ❑ **No Explicit Recognition of Status**
- ❑ **Explicit Recognition of Status**

2. Options on Nature of Municipal Status

- ❑ Level of Government
- ❑ Order of Government

3. Options on Instruments of Municipal Status

- ❑ Constitutional Instruments
- ❑ Statutory Instruments
- ❑ Intergovernmental Policy Instruments

4. Options on Uniformity and Variance of Municipal Status

- ❑ Uniform Status
- ❑ Variable Status

5. Options on Principles of Municipal Status

- ❑ Adopting Principles of Other Provinces
- ❑ Adopting Principles of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
- ❑ Adopting Principles of Other Sources

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to the relative merits of various options related to the following facets of municipal status:**
  - **The Recognition of Municipal Status**
  - **The Nature of Municipal Status**
  - **The Instruments of Municipal Status**
  - **The Uniformity and Variance of Municipal Status**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Although during the Task Force's consultations the principal focus of leaders and members of Northern communities was on the authority and autonomy of municipal governments rather than the legal or political status *per se*, there is some linkage between those issues.

- If the issue of municipal status receives considerable attention during any review or renewal initiatives for the rural and urban municipal sectors, it is likely to generate considerable interest within the Northern municipal sector. Such interest will be particularly pronounced among those who are already thinking about the 'levels' and 'orders' of governments that should exist within the Northern Administration District in the future.

- Those interested in the issue of the status of municipal governments should read the information contained in the corresponding section of the Task Force's final report on the rural and urban municipal sectors.

VI. MUNICIPAL FINANCES

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *What changes, if any, are needed to improve the financial capacity of municipal governments in Northern Saskatchewan?*

- Improving the financial capacity of northern municipal governments requires devoting attention to the following three key elements of the financial framework:

Key Elements of Financial Framework

1. **Sources of Municipal Revenues**
2. **Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account (NRSTA) Revenues/Expenditures**
3. **Composition and Role of the NRSTA Management Board**

Element #1

1. Sources of Northern Municipal Revenues

Own Sources	Revenue Sharing, Grants & Transfers
Property Taxes	Northern Revenue Sharing
Licenses, Permits	Grants in Lieu of Taxes
Utility Charges	Program Grants – conditional, unconditional
User Fees	Other Grants & Transfers

Element #2

2. Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account (NRSTA)

Revenue Sources	Expenditures
Taxes from properties & developments outside northern municipalities	Northern municipal operating grants
Special Assessments	Capital works grants
Lease & Sale of Northern Crown Lands	Water and sewer infrastructure
Interest earnings	Administrative and assessment fees of Saskatchewan Environment & Resource Management and Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing
Other Provincial Transfers	

Element #3

3. NRSTA Management Board

- The NRSTA Management Board makes recommendations to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing regarding the allocation of NRSTA operating and capital grants to northern municipalities.

- The Board is composed of councillors, mayors, clerks and administrators of northern municipalities appointed by the Minister for three-year terms.

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

Options for Revenue Sources

1. Sources of Municipal Revenues

- ☐ Status Quo
- ☐ Additional and Expanded 'Own-Source' Municipal Revenues (e.g., taxes, licenses, fees & levies)
- ☐ Additional & Expanded Revenue Sharing, Grants & Transfers
- ☐ Combination of all of the Above

2. Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account

Options for NRSTA Revenues

(a) Revenues

- ☐ Status Quo
- ☐ Expand Current Revenue Sources (e.g., resource royalties, land sales and lease fees, stumpage fees, etc.)
- ☐ Additional Revenue Sources (e.g., sales taxes, income taxes, liquor and gaming revenues, etc.)
- ☐ Combination of all of the Above

Options for NRSTA Expenditures

(b) Expenditures

- ☐ Status Quo
- ☐ Modification of Grant/Expenditure Formulas (e.g., maximum amounts, per capita amounts, etc.)
- ☐ Remove Eligibility for Certain Expenditures/Projects/Fees
- ☐ Establish New and Separate Funding Pools under NRSTA (e.g., for training or regional/northern structures and associations, etc.)

Options for Composition NRSTA Management Board

3. Composition of NRSTA Management Board

- ☐ Status Quo – Elected & Appointed Municipal Officials
- ☐ Elected Municipal Officials Only
- ☐ Appointed Municipal Officials Only
- ☐ No Elected or Appointed Municipal Officials
- ☐ Combination of Above

Options for Appointment of NRSTA Management Board

4. Appointment of NRSTA Management Board

- ☐ Ministerial Appointment
- ☐ Municipal Appointment
- ☐ Municipal Nomination
- ☐ Combination of Ministerial Appointment and Municipal Nomination

Options for Role of NRSTA Management Board

5. Role of NRSTA Management Board

- ☐ Advisory Role
- ☐ Decision-Making Role
- ☐ Combination of Advisory & Decision-Making

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

1. Directions Regarding Financial Framework

Produce a More Appropriate Financial Framework

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing and renewing the current municipal financial framework in Northern Saskatchewan with the intent to produce an appropriate framework that is consonant with the various potential renewal initiatives to other facets of the municipal system in Northern Saskatchewan.**

2. Directions Regarding Municipal Revenue Sources

Provide Adequate, Predictable, and Secure Access

- **Consideration should be given to finding the means of ensuring that all municipal governments have adequate, predictable and secure access to appropriate revenue resources.**

Access to Additional Own-Source Revenues

- **Consideration should be given to exploring options for providing northern municipal governments access to additional local or own-source revenues.**

Adopting Principles on Municipal Finances

- **Consideration should be given to the adoption of the following types of principles regarding municipal finances:**
  - **Municipal expenditures should funded primarily from local sources of revenues (i.e., own source revenue) rather than provincial grants and transfers;**
  - **Continued reliance on, and greater control of, property tax base;**
  - **Access to alternative sources of municipal taxation revenue;**
  - **Greater transparency in revenue-sharing or tax-sharing;**
  - **Longer term commitments of provincial funding; and**
  - **Enhanced municipal taxation tools and financial management powers.**

3. Directions Regarding NRSTA Revenues

Increasing Types and Volume of Revenues

- **Consideration should be given to exploring the means for the following:**
  - **Increasing adherence to the letter and spirit of provisions in the NRSTA Act and agreements regarding revenues that should be going into the NRSTA;**
  - **Increasing transparency in the identification of NRSTA revenues;**
  - **Maximizing NRSTA revenues from existing sources; and**
  - **Identifying and targeting additional revenue sources for the NRSTA.**

4. Directions Regarding NRSTA Expenditures

Review NRSTA Expenditures

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing the following facets of NRSTA expenditures:**
  - **Increasing or decreasing the percentage of various municipal costs that are eligible for NRSTA funding;**
  - **Removing eligibility for certain expenditures and projects;**
  - **Removing costs of administration and assessment from the NRSTA; and**
  - **Establishing other specific grant and funding formulas such as maximum amounts or per capita amounts.**

Establish 'Special Programs or Projects Funding'

- **Consideration should be given to establishing one or several 'special programs or projects funds' under the NRSTA that are designated for specific purposes that have been identified by northern municipal and community leaders as important (e.g., the training of elected and appointed municipal officials).**

Enhance Authority of NRSTA Board for 'Programs or Projects Funds'

- **Consideration should be given to enhancing the authority of the NRSTA Management Board to make decisions regarding disbursements from any 'special programs or projects funds' established under the NRSTA.**

5. Directions Regarding NRSTA Management Board

(a) Composition

Combination of Municipal Officials and Others

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of altering the composition of the NRSTA Management Board to include members who are not municipal officials, and who have considerable expertise in fields such as financial management, corporate planning, economic development, and community development.**

(b) Nomination and Appointment of Members

Nomination by municipalities and province, and appointment by Minister

- **Consideration should be given to having some members of the NRSTA management Board being nominated by the Minister and others being nominated by municipalities while continuing the practice Ministerial appointment for all members of the Board.**

(c) Role of Members

Expand Role of NRSTA

- **Consideration should be given to expanding the scope of the NRSTA Management Board's role beyond an advisory role to include a more substantial decision-making role for certain types and levels of funding.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Participants in the Task Force's consultations indicated that municipal finances should be a priority during any review and renewal initiative.
- The adequacy of financial resources to perform current and future roles and responsibilities is a major preoccupation for municipal officials.
- Finding an adequate and appropriate financial framework is crucial for the future of the municipal governments and the communities they serve.

VII. MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

1. Roles and Responsibilities

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Does the current municipal legislation contain adequate and appropriate provisions regarding the roles and responsibilities of elected and appointed municipal officials, municipal councils, and municipal committees?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ☐ No change to current provisions and regulations
- ☐ Modification of current provisions and regulations
- ☐ New provisions regarding
  - Roles and responsibilities of elected officials;
  - Roles and responsibilities of appointed officials; and
  - Roles and responsibilities of councils and committees.

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

Review Roles and Responsibilities

- **Consideration should be given to undertaking a review of the adequacy and appropriateness of statutory provisions regarding the roles and responsibilities of elected and appointed municipal officials, municipal councils, and municipal committees.**

Incorporate New and Expanded Provisions in Legislation

- **Consideration should be given to incorporating new and expanded provisions in municipal legislation regarding the roles and responsibilities of elected and appointed municipal officials, municipal councils, and municipal committees.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Such provisions would help to clarify the roles and responsibilities of various elected and appointed municipal officials, individually and collectively.
- During the public consultations some participants indicated that statutory provisions regarding the official roles and responsibilities of various municipal officials (individually and collectively) are not always entirely clear. Indications were that such a lack of clarity creates confusion and problems for officials, particularly during transitions after elections when there is a change of elected officials.

2. Qualifications and Training of Municipal Officials

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

➢ *What changes, if any, are needed to statutory provisions regarding the qualifications and training of either elected municipal officials or appointed municipal officials?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ❑ Status Quo – No changes to qualifications and training;
- ❑ Improved and enhanced qualifications and training for elected municipal officials; and
- ❑ Improved and enhanced qualifications for appointed municipal officials.

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

➢ **Consideration should be given to developing more extensive training programs for elected municipal officials and appointed municipal officials.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

➢ Such training programs are desired by many municipal officials as a means to upgrade their own skills and also to increase the number of Northerners who will be qualified contest and fill elected and appointed municipal positions.

3. Municipal Elections

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

➢ *Does the current municipal legislation contain adequate and appropriate provisions regarding northern municipal elections?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ❑ No change to current provisions and regulations regarding elections
- ❑ Changes to Election Provisions Regarding:
  - Eligibility of Candidates
  - Timing of Elections (e.g., concurrent with health & education elections);
  - Terms of Council (e.g., three year terms); and
  - Voting Procedures (e.g., electronic voting, etc.).

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

➢ **Consideration should be given to undertaking a review of the current system of northern municipal elections with special attention to:**
- **Clarifying the eligibility of candidates for councilor;**
- **Concurrent municipal, health and education elections; and**
- **Innovative voting procedures (e.g., electronic voting, etc.).**

What is the Rationale?

[C] RATIONALE

➢ Some participants in the Task Force's northern consultations indicated that the electoral system should be reviewed and renewed, with particular emphasis on the matters noted above.

4. Accountability and Conflict of Interest

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Does the current legislation contain adequate and appropriate provisions regarding accountability and conflict of interest?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ☐ No change to current provisions and regulations
- ☐ Enhanced conflict of interest and accountability provisions and regulations

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing the statutory provisions regarding accountability and conflict of interest for municipal officials.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- During the public consultations some participants noted that statutory provisions regarding accountability and conflict of interest of municipal officials should be reviewed with the intent to clarify them as much as possible.
- A review of the accountability provisions could contribute not only in producing clearer provisions, but also to a greater awareness of the nature and importance of such provisions within the statutory framework.

5. Governance and Management Practices

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Does the current legislation contain adequate and appropriate provisions regarding governance and management practices for northern municipal councils?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ❑ No change to current provisions and regulations;
- ❑ Changes to governance practices (e.g., meetings, committees, and quorum)
- ❑ Changes to management practices (e.g., personnel matters)
- ❑ Changes to financial management practices (e.g., budgets and expenditures); and
- ❑ Changes to public accessibility (e.g., petitions, plebiscites, and referenda).

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing and renewing key statutory provisions regarding the fundamental principles of governance and management practices.**

- **Consideration should be given to incorporating fundamental principles regarding governance and management practices in the statutory framework.**

- **Consideration should be given to ways and means of making elected and appointed municipal officials as well as ratepayers and residents aware of the fundamental principles regarding governance and management practices.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- The incorporation of fundamental principles regarding governance and management in northern municipal legislation would help ensure elected and appointed municipal officials as well as residents and ratepayers are aware of such principles and understand their importance.

6. Advisory Mechanisms and Processes

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Is the current framework of advisory services for municipalities adequate and appropriate either for today or for the future?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ❑ No change to current mechanisms or processes of advisory services
- ❑ Minor changes to current advisory services mechanisms or processes
- ❑ Major changes to current advisory services mechanisms or processes

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given reviewing and renewing the roles, responsibilities, and resources of the Northern Municipal Services Unit of the Department of Municipal Affairs Culture and Housing located in La Ronge to determine whether any changes are needed to ensure that it can continue to serve northern municipalities and quasi-municipalities effectively in the future.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- During the Task Force's consultations in Northern Saskatchewan, the issue of the roles, responsibilities, and resources of the Northern Municipal Advisory Services Branch emerged on several occasions.

- Some participants indicated that they would like to see the reliance on the Northern Municipal Services Unit maintained at the current level and others indicated that they would like to see it decreased.

- Moreover, some of those who rely on the support services provided by the Northern Municipal Services Unit indicated that despite the dedication and good work of the current staff, it does not have sufficient resources to fully serve the various communities 'on site'. This is particularly true of the resources needed to serve hamlets and settlements that do not have their own full time administrative staff to deal with management and administrative matters.

7. Community Planning Mechanisms and Processes

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Is the current framework of community planning services adequate and appropriate either for today or for the future?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ☐ No change to current mechanisms or processes of community planning services
- ☐ Minor changes to current community planning mechanisms or processes
- ☐ Major changes to current community planning mechanisms or processes

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing and renewing the community planning mechanisms and processes devoted to assisting northern municipalities with community planning, with special attention to the roles, responsibilities, and resources of the Community Planning Unit of the Department of Municipal Affairs Culture and Housing located in Prince Albert.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- A review of the community planning mechanisms and processes is important in determining whether they meet the current and future needs of northern municipalities.

- Such mechanisms and processes are essential for enhancing effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in community planning.

- During the Task Force's consultations some participants expressed their appreciation for the level and quality of support services provided by the Community Planning Unit. However, some also indicated that more resources and alternative regulatory and provincial approval frameworks may be required to avoid costly delays in producing and approving plans for some strategic initiatives or opportunities.

8. Appeal Mechanisms and Processes

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Does the current municipal system contain adequate and appropriate appeal mechanisms?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ☐ No change to current appeal mechanisms and processes
- ☐ Changes to appeal current mechanisms and processes
  - Municipal Board, Minister, and/or Cabinet
- ☐ New appeal mechanisms and processes
  - Municipal Ombudsman

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing and renewing various existing appeal mechanisms and processes.**

- **Consideration should be given to establishing a Municipal Ombudsman Office.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Some participants in the consultation processes indicated that a review and renewal of appeal mechanisms is desirable and due. More specifically, they indicated that both the nature and scope of matters that can be appealed by ratepayers and residents and the ease with which they can do so should be examined.

- A Municipal Ombudsman could review and make recommendations on matters that ratepayers and residents of northern communities feel that they need someone to determine whether proper procedures have been followed in applying and enforcing various laws, regulations, and policies.

- A Municipal Ombudsman could prove particularly useful for ratepayers and residents who feel that the current appeal mechanisms and processes (e.g., Municipal Board and the courts) are either unduly cumbersome or costly. A Municipal Ombudsman could review appeals from ratepayers and residents and thereby minimize the need to refer such matters either to the courts, the Municipal Board, or the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Moreover, the Ombudsman could make recommendations on eliminating problematic regulations, policies or practices that create problems both for municipalities and their residents and ratepayers.

VIII. MUNICIPAL PROCESSES

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *What types of* incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, or amalgamation *processes are required for Northern municipalities?*
- *Who should have the authority to initiate, object to, review and approve such processes?*

- There are five major processes that are important for municipal governance. This includes the following:

  - The *Incorporation Process* which is the means by which municipalities are officially incorporated.
  - The *Reversion/Conversion Process* is a process by which a municipal entity's classification is changed depending on its ability to meet various incorporation criteria (e.g., a village to a town or vice versa).
  - The *Dissolution Process* is a means by which a municipal entity may lose its status as an incorporated municipal entity. After dissolution, the area and people that were governed by the dissolved municipality are governed either by any of the following: another incorporated municipal government following amalgamation or annexation; some unincorporated local authority; the provincial government; some other order of government (e.g., First Nations' reserves).
  - The *Amalgamation Process* which is the means by which two or more municipal entities are joined or integrated to form a new municipality.
  - The *Annexation Process* is a process by which part of one municipality or unincorporated area is joined to a different municipality or unincorporated area.

[B] OPTIONS

What are the Options?

1. Authority for Initiating Proposals

- The major options regarding who may be authorized to initiate official proposals for incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, or amalgamation are as follows:
  - ❑ Only Municipal Electors
  - ❑ Only Municipal Council
  - ❑ Only the Municipal Minister
  - ❑ Any Combination of the Above

2. Authority for Objecting to Proposals

- The major options regarding who may formally object to any official proposals for incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, or amalgamation are as follows:
  - ❑ Only Municipal Electors of an Affected Municipality
  - ❑ Only a Municipal Council of an Affected Municipality
  - ❑ Only the Municipal Minister
  - ❑ Any Combination of the Above

3. **Authority to Review Objection to Proposals**

- There are at least three major entities that could review an objection to any official proposals for incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, or amalgamation:
  - ☐ Only the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs
  - ☐ Only the Municipal Board
  - ☐ Only a Special Review Commission
  - ☐ Any Combination of the Above

4. **Authority to Establish Public Hearings on Proposals**

- The major options regarding who may authorize or conduct public hearings on an official proposal for incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, or amalgamation, include:
  - ☐ Only the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs
  - ☐ Only the Municipal Board
  - ☐ Only a Special Review Commission
  - ☐ Any Combination of the Above

5. **Authority for Approving Proposals**

- The major options regarding who may have the authority to approve an official proposal for incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, or amalgamation, include:
  - ☐ Only the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs
  - ☐ Only a Commission
  - ☐ Only the Municipal Board
  - ☐ Only the Lieutenant Governor in Council
  - ☐ Only the Legislature
  - ☐ Any Combination of the Above

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing and renewing the processes, and particularly the authority frameworks and the conditions and criteria for initiating, objecting to, reviewing, and approving official proposals for the incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, and amalgamation of municipalities.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- The current statutory provisions related to the authority for initiating, objecting to, reviewing, and approving official proposals for incorporation, reversion, dissolution, annexation, and amalgamation may not be sufficiently developed in light of what is required to meet the current and future needs of the Northern municipal sector. The potential problems and the potential directions for renewal to these processes are profiled in greater detail within the Task Force's final report on renewal for the rural and urban municipal sectors.

IX. MUNICIPAL CLASSIFICATION

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *What changes, if any, should be made to the classification of municipalities and quasi-municipalities in Northern Saskatchewan?*

1. Local Municipalities

- Local municipalities are fully incorporated municipal governments under *The Northern Municipalities Act*, with decision-making ability and a range of functions (i.e., roles and responsibilities), powers and duties.
- There are currently three types of local municipalities in Northern Saskatchewan – northern towns, northern villages and northern hamlets.
- All these types currently perform the same basic functions (i.e., roles and responsibilities), with some variation in powers (i.e., authority and autonomy), and some financial matters (particularly concerning northern hamlets).
- The criteria for the classification of different types of northern municipalities are based on minimum population and a minimum number of dwellings.
- Many northern municipalities exceed the population criteria for the next municipal classification type, and some no longer meet the minimum criteria for their current municipal type (see Appendix 2.1 for the Number, Types, and Criteria for Municipal Incorporation).

2. Local Quasi-Municipalities

- Local quasi-municipalities are unincorporated municipal entities that have only advisory roles with limited duties and responsibilities, but no significant decision-making authority.
- There are currently two types of local quasi-municipalities in Northern Saskatchewan – northern settlements and recreational subdivisions.

3. Regional Municipalities

- Regional municipalities are fully incorporated municipal governments that are responsible for all or certain governance and management functions for an area consisting of two or more communities, local municipalities, quasi-municipalities and any unincorporated areas within the region.
- Currently there are no provisions in *The Northern Municipalities Act* for regional forms of municipalities.

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ❑ Retain current classification of local municipalities & quasi-municipalities
- ❑ Consolidate current classification of local municipalities & quasi-municipalities
- ❑ Add regional municipalities to current classification of municipalities and quasi-municipalities

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- ➢ **Consideration should be given to the merits of consolidating the classification system of local municipalities to include only towns and villages.**
- ➢ **Consideration should be given to the merits of expanding the classification system of quasi-municipalities to include hamlets as well as settlements and recreational sub-divisions.**
- ➢ **Consideration should be given to the merits of adding regional municipalities to the classification of municipalities and quasi-municipalities.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- ➢ The current threefold classification of municipalities (i.e., towns, villages and hamlets) does not seem to serve much of a practical purpose. There are two major reasons for this:
  - ♦ First, there are no substantial or significant differences between them either in the functions they perform or their capacities. Part of the reason for this is that the existing incorporation criteria is not fully applied and enforced. Consequently there are hamlets that according to the incorporation criteria could be villages, and villages that could be towns. and vice-versa.
  - ♦ Second, the organizational capacity (i.e., financial and human of resources) stemming from the population and assessment base of some hamlets is equal to or greater than that of some villages, and that of some villages is greater than or equal to that of some towns. Similarly, some settlements have an organizational capacity comparable to that of some fully incorporated hamlets. Indeed, some hamlets have more in common with settlements than with towns or villages in terms of their functions, finances, and their governance and management frameworks.
- ➢ As explained in the next section of this report, the addition of regional municipalities to the classification of municipalities would provide northern communities with an important governance option for addressing the needs of northern communities and municipal governments.

X. MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION

What is at Issue?

1. Incorporation Criteria for Local Municipalities

[A] ISSUES

What are the Options?

➢ What should be the incorporation criteria for establishing local municipalities within the Northern Administration District?

[B] OPTIONS

1. Criteria for Local Municipalities

❑ Incorporation as a 'local municipality' could be based on the ability to meet two criteria:

1. A minimum population base; and
2. A minimum assessment base that, using a reasonable mill rate, can sustain at least the operating costs of an effective municipal administrative structure, and preferably one that can also sustain at least a substantial portion of the capital and operating costs for local municipal infrastructure and services.

❑ The minimum for each of the two above criteria could be considered in light of the functions that local municipalities are to be assigned, and whether regional municipalities, regional authorities, or regional municipal support services agencies exist.

❑ Examples of options that could be considered for incorporation as a 'local municipality' are:

Option 1:

- A minimum population base greater than 200; and
- A minimum assessment base greater than $1 million.

Option 2:

- A minimum population base greater than 500; and
- A minimum assessment base greater than $2 million.

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to establishing incorporation criteria that balances the functions of various types of municipalities with their capacity to perform those functions given their population and assessment bases.**

- **Consideration should be given to establishing incorporation criteria for local municipalities that is contingent on whether local municipalities are part of a Regional Municipality, Regional Authority, or a Regional Municipal Support Services Agency that performs key functions.**

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of setting a lower population base and assessment base for the incorporation of those that are part of a regional entity, and a higher population base and assessment base for the incorporation of those that are not part of a regional entity.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- The creation or incorporation of municipalities should be based on some objective criteria that provide a balance between the functions that municipalities and quasi-municipalities must or may perform and their capacity to do so.

- It is prudent to establish incorporation criteria that increases the probability that municipalities and quasi-municipalities will have the financial capacity to cover at least the operating costs (and ideally also a substantial portion of the capital costs) for serving reasonably sized communities.

- Similarly, it is prudent to have criteria for establishing local municipalities and quasi-municipalities that are contingent on whether there is any type of regional municipalities, authorities or support services agencies. The reason for this is that the existence or absence of such of regional entities will have a substantial bearing on the functions that local municipalities must or may perform and their ability to do so.

- Although the population base is important, the assessment base and particularly the ability to generate revenues from it could be the more significant of the two criteria. In some Northern communities it may not be enough to consider the assessment base, consideration must also be given to how much revenues can be generated from it given the financial pressures experienced by a substantial portion of the members of many Northern communities.

PART FIVE:
REGIONAL MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

INTRODUCTION

- This section of the report profiles issues, options, and potential directions related to a system of 'regional municipal governance' within the Northern Administration District.

- The issue of regional municipal governance is being profiled in this report because the Task Force shares the belief of some people who participated in its consultation processes that it is an option of crucial importance for all northern communities. Indeed it is especially important for those communities that do not have the requisite financial and human resources to deal with all facets of municipal governance on an individual local basis. It is particularly important for them for improving both:
  - The quality of municipal infrastructure and services for their members; and
  - The degree of authority and autonomy that they will have vis-à-vis the provincial government.

- Within the Northern Administration District (as in the rest of the province), there is both support and opposition to regional municipal governance.

- 'Regional municipal governance' is a broad term that encompasses more than just 'regional municipal government' *per se*. It refers to any form of municipal governance or decision-making that covers what in geo-political terms can be considered to be a 'regional area' rather than a 'local area'.

- The objective in this part of the report is to profile key issues, options, and potential directions related to the following facets of regional municipal governance:
  - Statutory Framework for Regional Governance
  - Organizational Framework for Regional Governance
  - Financial Framework for Regional Governance
  - Geographic Framework for Regional Governance

The section on 'Organizational Framework for Regional Governance' consists that, notwithstanding the fact that they are designated as sections for numbering purposes, are subsections devoted in turn to the following topics:

- Regional Governments
- Regional Authorities
- Regional Support Services Agencies
- Regional Coordinating Committees

- As was the case with the previous section of this report, the key issues, options, and potential directions are profiled in a relatively succinct manner in order to avoid making this report unduly cumbersome to read.

- Anyone interested either in background material or comparative material on any of the facets of regional municipal governance being profiled in this part of the report should consult one or both of the following:
  - The corresponding part(s) of the Final Report on the rural and urban municipal sectors; and/or
  - 'Appendix 5: Models of Regional Municipal Governance' of this report.

I. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

What are the Issues?

[A] ISSUES

- ***Should any additional provisions be included in the municipal statutory framework regarding the creation, operation, and financing of regional governments or any other regional municipal organizational entities?***
- ***What types of instruments should be used for including such provisions within the statutory framework?***
- ***What types of provisions regarding regional governance, if any, should be included in a municipal statutory framework?***

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

1. **Options on Including Provisions in Statutory Framework**

   - ❑ Include provisions on regional governance
   - ❑ Do not include provisions on regional governance

2. **Options on Instruments for Including Provisions in Statutory Framework**

   - ❑ A Special Section in *The Northern Municipalities Act*
   - ❑ A Special Act on Regional Municipal Governance
   - ❑ A Special Charter for Each Regional Government

3. **Options on Types of Provisions in Statutory Framework**

   - ❑ Provisions on Processes
   - ❑ Provisions on Functions
   - ❑ Provisions on Governance and Management
   - ❑ Provisions on Finances

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

1. **Provisions on Regional Governance**

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of providing an explicit statutory basis for regional municipal governance by including provisions in municipal legislation sanctioning the creation of regional municipal governments and authorities, as well as the processes and mechanisms for doing so, comparable to that of other jurisdictions.**

2. **Instruments for Including Provisions on Regional Governance**

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of using one of the following statutory instruments for providing the statutory basis to regional governance:**
  - **A special section of a general municipal act;**
  - **A special regional governments and authorities act; or**
  - **A special regional government/authority charter for each regional entity.**

3. Types of Provisions to Include on Regional Governance

3.1 Provisions for Processes of Regional Governance

- **Consideration should be given to the nature of the provisions and principles that should be included in the municipal statutory framework regarding the processes for the incorporation, dissolution, annexation, and amalgamation of regional governments and authorities wherever and whenever it is deemed appropriate or necessary with special attention to the roles and responsibilities of each of the following:**
  - **Local municipal electors;**
  - **Local municipal councils;**
  - **Provincial minister;**
  - **Provincial cabinet; and**
  - **Provincial legislature.**

- **Consideration should be given to the relative merits of the provisions and principles regarding the processes for the incorporation, dissolution, annexation, and amalgamation of regional governments and authorities contained in the statutes of other jurisdictions as potential models for Northern Saskatchewan.**

3.2 Provisions for Forms or Types of Regional Governments or Authorities

- **Consideration should be given to including provision and principles in municipal legislation regarding the general forms or types of regional governments or authorities that may be created, including:**
  - **One-tier regional governments or authorities;**
  - **Two-tier regional governments or authorities; or**
  - **Both one-tier and two-tier regional governments or authorities.**

- **Consideration should be given to the relative merits of the provisions and principles regarding the forms or types of regional governments and authorities contained in the statutes of other jurisdictions as potential models for Northern Saskatchewan.**

3.3 Provisions for Functional Frameworks of Regional Governance

- **Consideration should be given to including provisions and principles in municipal legislation indicating what functions regional municipal governments or authorities may perform including, for example, the following sets of general functions:**
  - **Planning and Development Functions**
    -Land Use Planning and Development
    -Transportation Planning and Development
    -Economic Development and Planning
  - **Service Delivery Functions**
    -Water, sewer, waste disposal
    -Emergency and Protective Services
    -Community Services
  - **Regulatory Functions**
    -Building and Fire Standards
    -Licensing and Bylaw Enforcement
  - **Financial Functions**
    -Assessment and Taxation

- **Consideration should be given to the relative merits of the provisions and principles regarding the functional frameworks for regional governments and authorities contained in the municipal statutes of other jurisdictions as potential models for Northern Saskatchewan.**

3.4 Provisions for Governing/Management Frameworks of Regional Governance

- **Consideration should be given to including provisions and principles in municipal legislation regarding governance and management frameworks for regional governments and authorities such as:**
  - **The size of regional councils and boards;**
  - **The composition of regional councils and boards;**
  - **The selection of regional councils and boards; and**
  - **The management frameworks for regional councils and boards.**

- **Consideration should be given to the relative merits of the provisions and principles regarding the governing and management frameworks for regional governments and authorities contained in the municipal statutes of other jurisdictions as potential models for Northern Saskatchewan.**

3.5 Directions on Provisions for Financial Frameworks for Regional Governance

- **Consideration should be given to including provisions and principles in the municipal statutory framework regarding the means by which regional governments or authorities may be financed including, for example, the following general means:**
  - **Requisitions from local municipal councils;**
  - **Requisitions from other local authorities;**
  - **Special taxes and levies;**
  - **Provincial-municipal tax sharing arrangements;**
  - **Provincial-municipal revenue-sharing; and**
  - **Provincial transfers.**

- **Consideration should be given to the relative merits of the provisions and principles regarding the financial frameworks for regional governments and authorities contained in the municipal statutes of other jurisdictions as potential models for Northern Saskatchewan.**

[D] RATIONALE

What is the Rationale?

- The proposed directions could provide Northern Saskatchewan with a statutory framework for regional governance comparable to that of other provinces that would supplement, rather than supplant, the existing statutory framework for local municipal governance.

- The precise nature of that framework would depend on the types of decisions made by municipal and provincial officials in consultation with those whom they represent regarding the type of statutory framework that would be appropriate for Northern Saskatchewan.

- Such an enabling statutory framework could provide communities with the means to make important decisions regarding appropriate governance frameworks among neighbouring communities within various regions that could have major consequences for their future. Everyone would know the 'processes and parameters' for creating regional governments.

- Everyone would know the' processes and parameters' for creating regional governments or authorities.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

[A] ISSUES

What are the Issues?

- This sub-section of the report profiles four major organizational entities that should be considered as part of any organizational framework for regional governance:

  1. Regional Governments
  2. Regional Authorities
  3. Regional Support Services Agencies
  4. Regional Coordinating Committees

- The issues, options, proposed directions, and rationale for the proposed directions related to each of those organizational entities are discussed in turn below.

- Before examining each of them in turn, however, it is useful to explain both:
  - The basic nature of each of those regional entities; and
  - How they might be combined to form a useful regional governance framework for Northern Saskatchewan.

What are the Options?

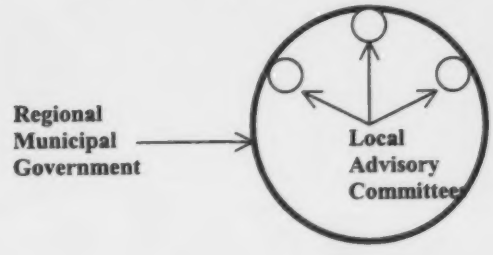
[B] OPTIONS

1. BASIC NATURE OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL ENTITIES

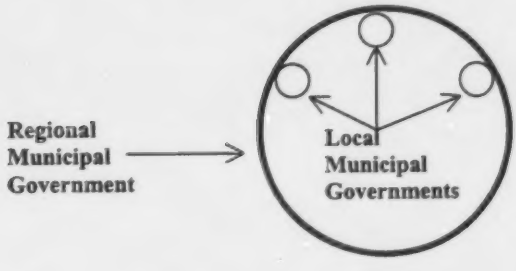
1.1 Regional Municipal Governments

- Regional municipal governments generally govern areas that include more than one community.
- They can be the only municipal government for that area (one-tier) or they can exist in addition to any local municipal governments in that area (two-tier).

One-Tier:

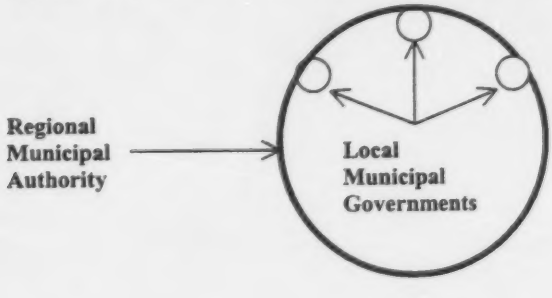


Two-Tier:



1.2 Regional Municipal Authorities

- Regional municipal authorities are similar in nature to regional municipal governments, except that they do not possess certain general governance powers or authority granted to municipal governments. Rather, regional authorities are given specific roles and responsibilities for performing a particular function or functions (e.g., planning) for the member municipalities within that region, but they possess only limited governance powers and duties.



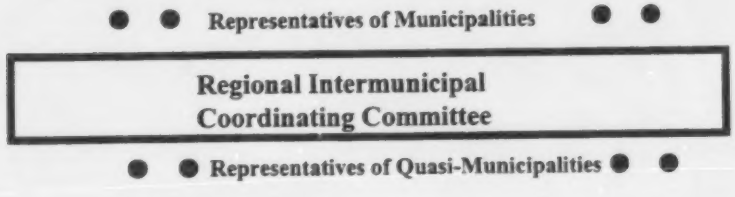
1.3 Regional Municipal Support Services Agencies

- Regional municipal support services includes a variety of technical and management expertise that northern municipalities rely on in providing certain services and in performing certain functions, such as land use and infrastructure planning, community and economic development, local administration, and so on.
- Currently, northern municipalities use a combination of in-house expertise and staff, private sector consultants, and provincial government officials from various departments but particularly the Department Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing and the Department of Northern Affairs.
- The Regional Support Services Agency model would provide northern municipalities and quasi-municipalities with the means to cooperate in establishing their own support services agencies on a regional basis to serve their respective needs.

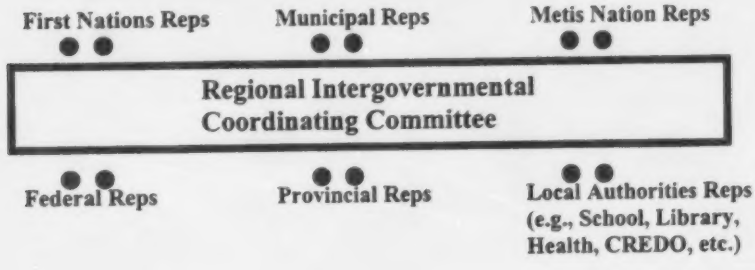
1.4. Regional Coordinating Committees

- Regional Coordinating Committees could consist of representatives of the various governing authorities. Such committees could consist of representatives from any two or more governments (e.g., municipal, provincial, federal, and Aboriginal), representatives of any other local or regional governing authorities or agencies (e.g., school, library, health, economic development, etc.), and even representatives of private sector entities.
- Regional Coordinating Committees are generally responsible for performing coordination, planning, and advocacy functions among the various governing authorities as well as between governing and non-governing entities.
- The existing Northern Development Board is an example of such a committee.

(a) Regional Intermunicipal Coordination



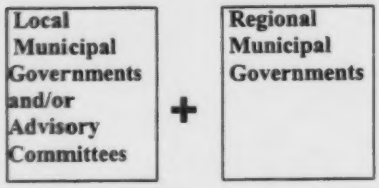
(b) Regional Intergovernmental Coordination



2. Potential Combinations of Regional Organizational Entities

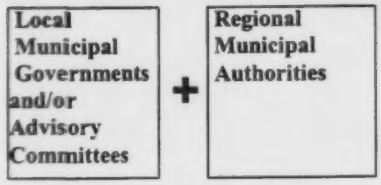
- Those regional organizational entities can be combined in many ways to suit the needs and preferences of various parts of Northern Saskatchewan. The combinations outlined below are intended to be examples of what could emerge in the regional context.
- The assumption in the models profiled below is that either or both local governments and local advisory committees would exist along with any other regional entities.

2.1 First Potential Combination



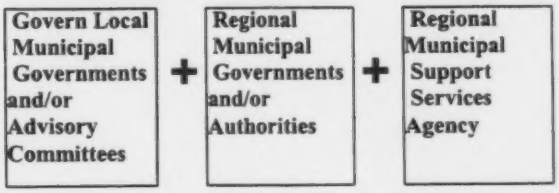
- Under this option, two tiers of municipal governments would exist—one at the local level and one at the regional level.
- **Local** municipal governments would deal with matters of a purely **local** nature, and **regional** municipal governments would deal with matters of a primarily **regional** nature.

2.2 Second Potential Combination



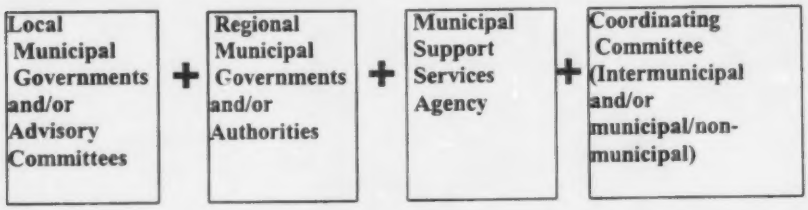
- Under this combination there are regional 'authorities' rather than regional 'governments'. The regional authorities, like the regional governments, would perform one or several specific functions that are regional in nature, and the local municipal governments would perform the functions that are local in nature.

2.3 Third Potential Combination



- Under this option, both local and regional municipal governments (or authorities) would exist, as well as a Municipal Support Services Agency.
- Such an Agency would be established to support or assist both local and regional municipal governments or authorities in performing key functions such as planning, development, management, and service delivery.
- The Municipal Support Services Agency would consist of professional staff possessing technical expertise, and dedicated to helping their member northern communities and municipalities with all types of:
  - planning (e.g., land use, transportation, and infrastructure);
  - development (e.g., community, economic, and social);
  - management (e.g., human and financial resources); and
  - service delivery (e.g., infrastructure and community services).
- Such an Agency could be established either:
  - as a sub-unit of the regional municipal government or authority to serve both the regional government and the member municipalities and quasi-municipalities that exist either within a given region or the entire Northern Administration District;
  - as a separate unit to serve both the regional government and the member municipalities and quasi-municipalities that exist either within a given region or the entire Northern Administration District.

2.4 Fourth Potential Combination



- Under this option, both local and regional municipal governments (or authorities) would exist, and both a Municipal Support Services Agency and a Coordinating Committee would be established.

- The Coordinating Committee would eventually consist of representatives of the various governing (and possibly even non-governing) entities operating within a given region, or in Northern Saskatchewan as a whole. Their function would be to improve inter-municipal and municipal/non-municipal coordination, cooperation, and communication in the North.

What are the Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS ON ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- **Consideration should be given to the appropriate types and combinations of organizational entities that should comprise the organizational framework for regional municipal governance in Northern Saskatchewan.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- The discussions on the appropriate types and combinations of regional organizational entities generated considerable interest during the Task Force's consultations with leaders and members of Northern communities.

- There was considerable interest in exploring the options for creating, operating, and funding various regional entities, even though some were dubious that agreement could be reached on the appropriate types and combinations of regional organizational entities.

III. REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Should regional governments be established for any two or more municipalities (i.e., towns, villages, and hamlets) and quasi-municipalities (settlements and sub-divisions)?*
- *What type(s) of electoral, decision-making, functional, and financial frameworks should be established for regional governments?*
- *Should such regional municipal governments be established as one tier or two-tier entities?*
- *What should be the incorporation criteria for regional municipalities within the Northern Administration District?*

What are the Options?

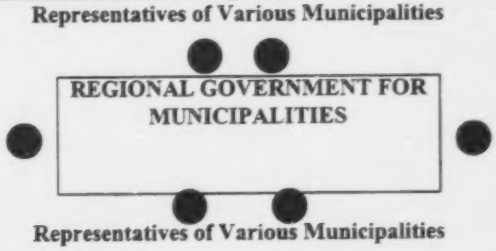
[B] OPTIONS

1. Options on Creating Regional Governments

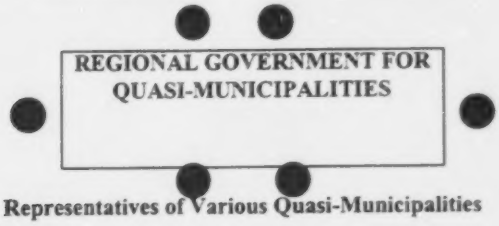
1.1. No Regional Governments

- Under this option, there would not be any formally sanctioned regional government or authority.

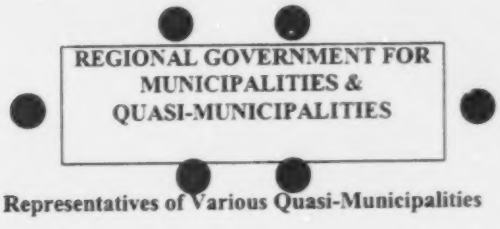
1.2. Regional Governments for Municipalities


Representatives of Various Municipalities
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR MUNICIPALITIES
Representatives of Various Municipalities

1.3. Regional Governments for Quasi-Municipalities


Representatives of Various Quasi-Municipalities
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR QUASI-MUNICIPALITIES
Representatives of Various Quasi-Municipalities

1.4. Regional Governments for Municipalities and Quasi-Municipalities


Representatives of Various Municipalities
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR MUNICIPALITIES & QUASI-MUNICIPALITIES
Representatives of Various Quasi-Municipalities

2. Options on Number of Tiers of Regional Governments

- One tier (local advisory bodies & regional governments)
- Two tier (local governments and regional governments)

3. Options for Incorporation Criteria of Regional Governments

- Incorporation as a 'regional municipality' could be based on the ability to meet three criteria:
  1. A minimum number of municipalities and/or quasi-municipalities;
  2. A minimum population base;
  3. A minimum assessment base that can sustain at least the operating costs of an effective municipal administrative structure, and preferably one that can also sustain some portion of the capital and operating costs for the municipal infrastructure and programs in a given region.
- The minimum for each of the criteria cited above could be considered in light of the precise functions and responsibilities that regional municipalities are assigned. Examples of options that could be considered for incorporation of 'regional municipalities' are:
  - **Option 1:**
    - A minimum of 3 neighbouring municipalities and quasi-municipalities;
    - A minimum population base greater than 1,500; and
    - A minimum assessment base greater than $6 million.
  - **Option 2:**
    - A minimum of 6 neighbouring municipalities and quasi-municipalities;
    - A minimum population base greater than 3,000; and
    - A minimum assessment base greater $12 million.

4. Options for Selecting Regional Councillors

- **Direct election** by voters of a region.
- **Appointment** by councils of member municipalities and quasi-municipalities within the region of individuals who are either:
  - Elected municipal officials;
  - Appointed municipal officials;
  - Combination of elected and Appointed Municipal Officials.

5. Options for Voting on Regional Councils

- ☐ Every representative has one vote that is of **equal weight**.
- ☐ Every representative has one vote, but the **weight** of the vote is a function of the following:
  - Proportion of the **population** of a representative's municipality or ward;
  - Proportion of the **financial contribution** of a representative's municipality or ward to the regional government.

6. Options on Nature of Functions of Regional Governments

- ☐ Only Municipal Advisory and Advocacy Functions
- ☐ Only Municipal Planning and Development Functions
- ☐ Only Municipal Infrastructure Functions
- ☐ Only Service Delivery Functions
- ☐ Combination of Above

7. Options on Designation of Functions of Regional Councils

- ☐ Functions Specified by Member Municipalities & Quasi-Municipalities
- ☐ Functions Specified in Legislation
- ☐ Combination of the Above.

8. Options on Financing of Regional Governments

- ☐ Transfers from the Provincial General Revenue Fund
- ☐ Provincial-Municipal Revenue Sharing Arrangements
- ☐ Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing Arrangements
- ☐ Requisitions and Contributions by member municipalities
- ☐ Special Levies and User Fees

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to establishing any of the following:**
  - **Regional Governments Exclusively for Municipalities;**
  - **Regional Governments Exclusively for Quasi-Municipalities;**
  - **Regional Governments for Municipalities and Quasi-Municipalities.**

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of establishing one tier versus two tier forms of regional governments.**

- **Consideration should be given to whether the incorporation of regional municipalities should be directed by the following fundamental principles:**
  - **'Regional municipalities should consist of a minimum number of municipalities and quasi-municipalities that collectively have both a minimum population and minimum assessment base within what is deemed to be a distinct geographic or economic region.'**
  - **'Regional governments should be established where there is a clear potential for member communities to benefit substantially from the regionalization of municipal governance, planning and development, or service delivery.'**

- **Consideration should be given to providing regional governments with the appropriate frameworks for elections, decision-making, functions, and finances.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Some leaders and members of northern communities who participated in the consultations indicated that the merits of regional governance, particularly a two-tier form of regional governance, should be considered as a means to meet the needs of northern communities and municipal governments.

- By creating regional municipal governments, local municipalities and quasi-municipalities could produce a governance and management framework with greater capacity, authority, and autonomy to address their respective needs and preferences in the future in areas such as:
  - Governance;
  - Management;
  - Planning and development;
  - Infrastructure;
  - Services; and
  - Intergovernmental coordination.

- Establishing some incorporation criteria for regional municipal governments would provide municipalities or quasi-municipalities interested in establishing regional entities with some important parameters in proposing, establishing, and operating them. The absence of such parameters makes it difficult to consider the nature and scope of any regional governance initiative.

- Even if they cannot agree on the precise criteria for the incorporation of regional municipalities, municipal and provincial representatives should consider producing some general guidelines regarding what might be considered logical, geographic areas within which regional governments may be established. Such guidelines should prove useful in determining both the initial and eventual composition of any regional municipalities.

IV. REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *Should regional authorities be established in Northern Saskatchewan and if so, what should be their forms, functional basis, and financial basis?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

1. Options for Functional Basis of Authorities

Option #1

1.1 Single-Function Authorities

- Under this option, northern communities would continue to be served by an array of single-function regional authorities (i.e., agencies, boards, and commissions) such as, for example:

Economic & Community Development:
- Community Regional Economic Development Organizations (CREDOs) 6
- Community Futures Corporations (FDCs) 2
- Interim Development Board
- Northern Review Board

Municipal Funding
- Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account Management Board

Transportation:
- Athabasca Transportation Planning Committee

Environment:
- Environmental Quality Committees (EQCs) 3

Recreation:
- Regional Recreation Associations (RRAs) 5

Housing:
- Regional Housing Authorities (RHAs) 8

Policing:
- Community Police Boards

Health:
- Health Districts (2) & Health Authorities (1)

Education
- Northern Lights School Division (1)
- Northlands Regional College

Library:
- Pahkisimon Nuyeah Library System (1)

Option #2

1.2 Multi-Function Authorities

- Under this option, northern communities would be served by a limited number of multi-function regional authorities (i.e., agencies, boards, and commissions).
- Notable examples of such authorities in Northern areas of other jurisdictions include:
  - Ontario's District Social Services Administration Boards;
  - Ontario's Area Service Boards;
  - Quebec's Kativik Regional Government; and
  - British Columbia's Regional Districts

Option #3

1.3 Combination of Single- and Multi-Function Authorities

- Under this option northern communities would be served by a combination of single-function and multi-function regional authorities (i.e., agencies, boards, and commissions).

2. Options for Geographic Basis of Authorities

- The options for establishing the geographic basis of regional authorities are as follows:
  - Regional Basis;
  - District Basis; or
  - A combination of Regional, and District Basis

Option #1

2.1 Regional Basis

- Under this option each community would be served by various agencies, boards, or commissions, organized explicitly on a regional basis (i.e., serving the various regions within the Northern Administration District).

Option #2

2.2 District Basis

- Under this option, each community would be served by various agencies, boards, or commissions organized exclusively on a 'district basis' (i.e., serving the entire Northern Administration District).

Option #3

2.3 Combination of Regional and District Basis

- Under this option northern communities would be served both by:
  - Authorities organized on a 'regional' basis; and
  - Authorities organized on a 'district-wide' basis.

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to establishing single- and multi-function authorities either or a regional or district-wide basis (in addition to governance councils or boards for municipalities and quasi-municipalities that may be established), that would perform important functions needed by various northern communities.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Renewal of the municipal system without due consideration to the number and nature of various authorities (i.e., agencies, boards, and commissions) in the North may not produce optimal results.

- Establishing a better mix of multi-function and single-function authorities than exists today could contribute to improved municipal governance and management in Northern Saskatchewan.

- Although the level of resources for agencies, boards, and commissions is very important for their effectiveness, their organizational configuration is more significant than is sometimes assumed. Appropriate configuration in terms of their nature and number can lead to more effective financing, resource utilization, policies, programs, projects, and any intergovernmental coordination or governmental and non-governmental coordination that is required for achieving these results.

- The current framework of regional and district authorities involving municipal governments in the North operates on an unduly fragmented basis with limited organizational resources.

- The fragmentation and limited organizational resources are obstacles to a coherent and integrated approach to meeting the needs of Northern communities. The sheer number of such authorities presents several problems:
  - It makes coherent and integrated planning between the various authorities difficult;
  - It makes it difficult to provide the various single function authorities with sufficient organizational resources and capacity to perform their functions effectively;
  - It consumes more resources in terms of coordination costs; and
  - It places considerable pressure on municipalities and their elected and appointed officials to participate in, and serve on, the multitude of single-function authorities.

V. REGIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AGENCIES

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- ***Should regional support services agencies be established to provide support services to local municipal governments on matters related to the management of human and financial resources, planning and development, and providing municipal infrastructure and services?***

What are the Options for Proposed Directions?

[B] OPTIONS

1. Options on Creation of Support Services Agencies

- ☐ Create regional support services agencies to serve member municipalities
- ☐ Create regional support services agencies to serve member quasi-municipalities
- ☐ Create regional support services agencies to serve both municipalities and quasi-municipalities

2. Options on Governance of Support Services Agencies

- ☐ Representatives of member municipalities
- ☐ Representatives of member quasi-municipalities
- ☐ Representatives of both member municipalities and quasi-municipalities

3. Options on Functions of Support Services Agencies

- ☐ Municipal planning & development support
- ☐ Municipal infrastructure and services delivery support
- ☐ Municipal management & administration support
- ☐ Municipal secretariat support for inter-municipal committees

4. Options on Financing Support Services Agencies

- ☐ Transfers from the provincial general revenue fund
- ☐ Provincial-municipal revenue sharing arrangements
- ☐ Provincial-municipal tax sharing arrangements
- ☐ Requisitions and contributions by member municipalities
- ☐ Special levies and user fees

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to establishing one or more Regional Support Services Agency to provide support services to local municipal governments on matters related to management of human and financial resources, planning and development, and providing municipal infrastructure and services.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Some leaders and members of northern communities who participated in the consultations indicated that the merits of creating one or more Regional Support Services Agency should be considered as a means to deal with needs of their communities and local municipal governments.

- The creation of one or more Regional Support Services Agency could prove valuable in providing local municipal governments and local advisory bodies of quasi-municipalities with the assistance they need for performing various functions related to the management of human and financial resources, planning and development, and providing municipal infrastructure and services.

- The creation of such agencies may be particularly useful in the absence of:
  - Any regional municipal governments; and
  - Sufficient resources within the various provincial departments to provide the requisite support services for municipal and para-municipal matters.

- The creation of such an agency is particularly important if regional or district municipal governments are not established.

VI. REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEES

[A] ISSUES

What is at Issue?

- *What types of inter-municipal and intergovernmental coordinating committees are required within the municipal sector in Northern Saskatchewan to ensure effective coordination between various orders of government?*

[B] OPTIONS

What are the Options?

- There are two main sets of options regarding Coordinating Committees:
  - Options for Membership Basis; and
  - Options for Functional Basis.

1. Membership Basis

- The major options for establishing a membership basis for Coordinating Committees are:
  - ❑ Municipal Governments;
  - ❑ Municipal & Aboriginal Governments
  - ❑ Municipal & Provincial Governments
  - ❑ Municipal & Federal Governments
  - ❑ Any Other Combination of the Above.

1. Functional Basis

- The major options for establishing a functional basis for Coordinating Committees are:
  - ❑ Single Function
  - ❑ Multi Function
  - ❑ Combination of Single-Function and Multi-Function

2. Geographic Basis

- The major options for establishing a geographic basis for Coordinating Committees are:
  - ❑ Local Basis
  - ❑ Regional Basis
  - ❑ District Basis
  - ❑ Any Combination of the Above

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to reviewing and renewing the existing framework of Regional Coordinating Committees operating in Northern Saskatchewan with the intent of establishing a more fully integrated and institutionalized framework with the appropriate membership, functional, financial, and geographic bases for them.**

What is the Rationale?

[C] RATIONALE

- During the consultations in Northern Saskatchewan community leaders and members indicated that the future of their communities depends on the nature and degree of inter-community, inter-municipal, and intergovernmental coordination and cooperation.
- The current framework of inter-municipal and intergovernmental coordination is relatively fragmented and ad-hoc in nature.
- The proposed directions for establishing and operating intergovernmental coordinating committees should contribute immensely to improving intergovernmental coordination in the North not only within the municipal sector, but also between the municipal sector and the Aboriginal, provincial, and federal governmental sectors.
- In turn, the improved intergovernmental coordination should contribute to improvements in the governance, management, planning and development, infrastructure, and services in the North.

VII. FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- What should be the nature and scope of the financial framework (i.e., revenue sources) for regional governance in Northern Saskatchewan?

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ☐ Transfers from the Provincial General Revenue Fund
- ☐ Provincial-Municipal Revenue Sharing Arrangements
- ☐ Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing Arrangements
- ☐ Requisitions and Contributions by member municipalities
- ☐ Special Levies and User Fees
- ☐ Other?

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to the nature and scope of the financial framework for regional governance within the Northern Administration District, with special attention to the special financial framework required for each facet of regional governance.**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Whenever the issue of regional governance emerged during consultations with leaders and members of northern communities, invariably the related issue of the financing of regional governance also emerged.

- Delineating the financial basis for regional governance within the Northern Administration District is essential for considering some important and substantial municipal renewal initiatives, particularly regarding the organizational basis of regional governance. The absence of a clear sense of what the appropriate and acceptable financial basis for regional municipal governance will likely impede any such governance initiatives.

VIII. GEOGRAPHIC FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONALGOVERNANCE

What is at Issue?

[A] ISSUES

- *If any facet of municipal governance is organized on a regional basis, how many regions should exist?*

What are the Options?

[B] OPTIONS

- ☐ One Region (Entire Northern Administration District)
- ☐ Three Regions (East, West, and North)
- ☐ Four Regions (East, West, North, and South)
- ☐ Five Regions (Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, Southwest, and Far North)
- ☐ Six or More Regions

What are the Proposed Directions?

[C] DIRECTIONS

- **Consideration should be given to the appropriate means and criteria for delineating the geographic basis various for various facets or elements of municipal governance within the Northern Administration District.**

- **Consideration should be given to the appropriate geographic basis for various facets or elements of municipal governance within the Northern Administration District.**

- **Consideration should be given to the merits of making boundaries for regional governance in the municipal sector coterminous with those in other sectors (e.g., health, education, economic development, housing, etc.).**

What is the Rationale?

[D] RATIONALE

- Whenever the issue of regional governance emerged during consultations with leaders and members of northern communities, invariably the related issue of the geographic basis of regional governance also emerged.

- Delineating the geographic basis of 'municipal regions' within the Northern Administration District is essential for considering some important and substantial municipal renewal initiatives, particularly regarding the organizational basis of regional governance. The absence of a clear sense of the appropriate and acceptable geographic basis for regional municipal governance will likely impede any such governance initiatives.

PART SIX:
APPENDICES

- The appendices are grouped into the five major sections:

1. UNIQUE FEATURES OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES
- 1.1 Geographic Features
- 1.2 Population of Communities and Municipal Governments
- 1.3 Population Growth in Northern Saskatchewan
- 1.4 Population Growth in Northern Saskatchewan Communities
- 1.5 Socio-Economic Features

2. STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF NORTHERN MUNICIPAL SYSTEM
- 2.1 Number, Types, and Criteria for Municipal Incorporation
- 2.2 Criteria for Classifying Local Municipalities in Canada

3. FUNCTIONAL FEATURES OF NORTHERN MUNICIPAL SYSTEM
- 3.1 Legislated Responsibilities of Northern Municipalities
- 3.2 Northern Municipal Functions by Expenditure

4. FINANCIAL FEATURES OF NORTHERN MUNICIPAL SYSTEM
- 4.1 Northern Municipal Revenue Sources
- 4.2 Total Revenues of Northern Municipal Entities
- 4.3 Assessment Base of Northern Municipal Entities
- 4.4 Mill Rates of Northern Municipal Entities

5. MODELS OF MUNICIPAL REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

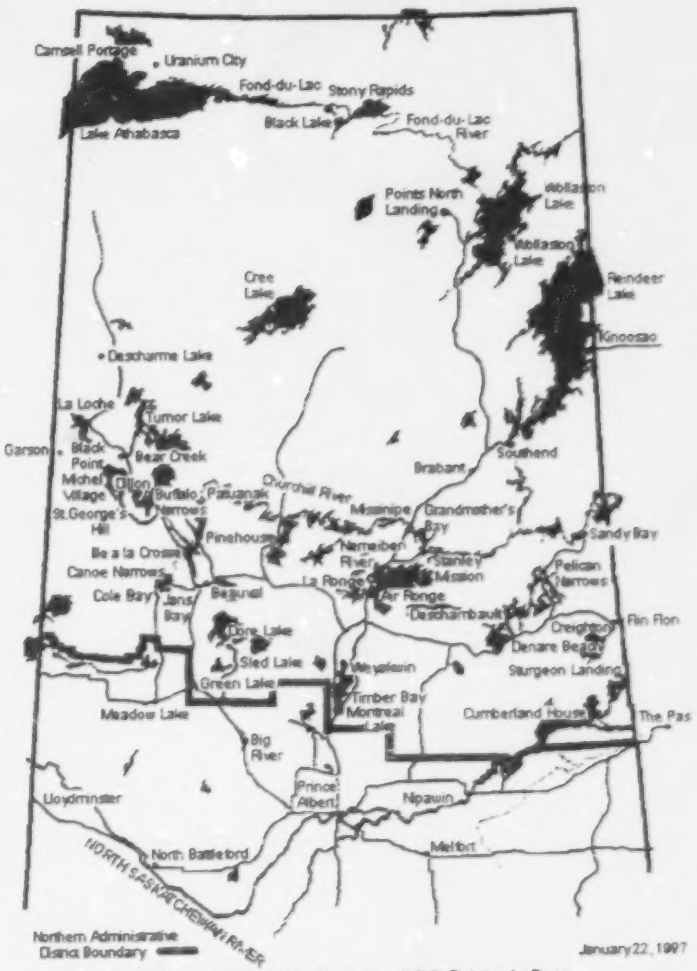
APPENDIX 1: UNIQUE FEATURES OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

1.1 Geographic Features

50% of the Geographic Area of Saskatchewan

- Northern Saskatchewan, as defined by the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District (NSAD) covers approximately half of the geographic area of the province of Saskatchewan. The boundaries of the NSAD are set out in legislation.

Northern Saskatchewan



1.2 Number, Types, and Population of Communities

Over 70 Communities

➢ Northern Saskatchewan has over 70 communities, consisting of three types of northern municipalities (towns, villages, and hamlets), one type of unincorporated quasi-municipality (settlements), other unincorporated communities and recreational subdivisions, and First Nation reserves.

Community	Population
Northern Towns	
• Creighton	1,713
• La Ronge	2,964
	4,677
Northern Villages	
• Air Ronge	957
• Beauval	785
	1,742
• Buffalo Narrows	1,053
• Cole Bay	153
	1,206
• Cumberland House	836
• Denare Beach	776
• Green Lake	536
• Ile A La Crosse	1,478
• Jans Bay	199
• La Loche	1,966
• Pelican Narrows	148
• Pinehouse	922
• Sandy Bay	959
	7,819
Northern Hamlets	
• Dore Lake	40
• Michel Village	75
• Missinipe	40
• Patuanak	89
• St. George's Hill	85
• Stony Rapids	233
• Timber Bay	101
• Turnor Lake	198
• Weyakwin	171
	1,032
Northern Settlements	
• Bear Creek	47
• Black Point	51
• Brabant Lake	102
• Camsell Portage	37
• Descharme Lake	42
• Garson Lake	34
• Sled Lake	35
• Southend	35
• Stanley Mission	166
• Uranium City	201
• Wollaston Lake	129
	1,059

Community	Population
Reserves/First Nations	
• Canoe Lake/Canoe Lake	649
• Chicken/Black Lake	1,223
• Cumberland/Cumberland House	351
• Fond du Lac/Fond du Lac	798
• Grandmother's Bay, Nemebien River, Morin Lake, Kitsakie,Stanley/Lac la Ronge	4,444
• La Loche/Clearwater River	541
• La Plonge, Wapachewunak/English River	597
• Lac la Hache/Hatchet Lake	872
• Montreal Lake/Montreal Lake	1,803
• Pelican Narrows, Sturgeon Weir, Sandy Bay, Deschambault Lake, Southend/Peter Ballantyne	4,320
• Peter Pond Lake/Buffalo River	520
• Turnor Lake/Birch Narrows	287
Recreational Subdivisions	
• East Trout Lake	
• Jan Lake	
• Keeley Lake	
• Lac La Plonge	
• Little Amyot Lake	
• Little Bear Lake	
• Michel Point	
• Napatak	
• Ramsey Bay	
• Sturgeon Weir	
• Tower Beach	
• Tyrrell Lake	
• Waden Bay	
• Whelan Bay	
Other	
• Flin Flon (Saskatchewan portion)	289
• Kinoosao	
• Points North Landing	

Notes:
1. Many First Nations in Northern Saskatchewan have several reserves, including the Lac La Ronge, English River and Peter Ballantyne First Nations. Only some of the major reserves are listed.
2. First Nations populations represent the total Registered Indians residing on all reserves; they do not include off-reserve populations.
3. Flin Flon is an incorporated city under Manitoba's *Municipal Act*.
4. Recreational subdivisions are subdivisions of resource lands that are so designated by the Minister.

Sources:
1. Populations of northern municipalities and settlements are from the 2000 Northern Municipal Directory, Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing, January 19, 2000.
2. First Nations populations are from First Nations Profiles, Registered Populations as of April 2000, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada, Electronic Service Delivery, http://esd.inac.gc.ca.
3. List of recreational subdivisions from '*1999 Northern Mill Rate Return Summary*,' Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing.

1.3 Population Growth in Northern Saskatchewan

Northern Saskatchewan's Population has Tripled Since 1941

➢ The graphs below show that population of Northern Saskatchewan has almost tripled since the 1940's from 11,000 to over 31,000 in 1996, and is projected to grow significantly into the future. This trend is predominantly a result of the increase in the Aboriginal population of Northern Saskatchewan.

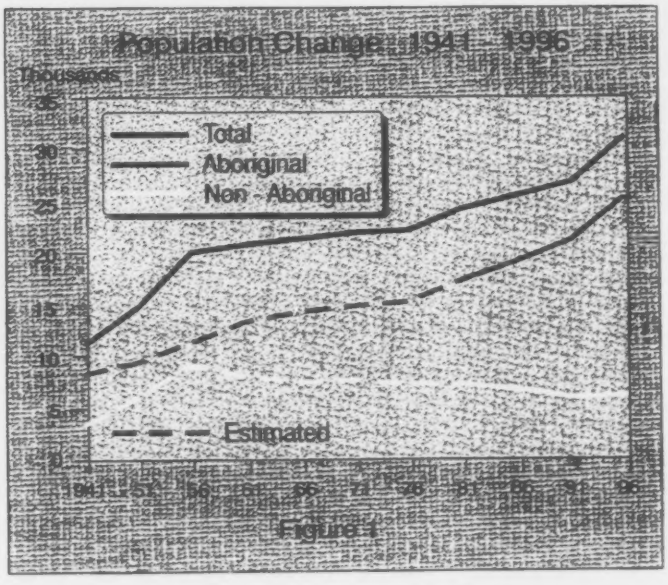
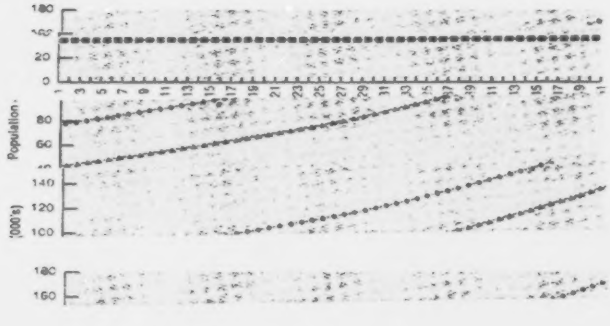


Figure 1

Source: Atlas of Saskatchewan, 1999.

Saskatchewan Regional Population Projection 1995-2045

Region 1 – Northern Saskatchewan



Source: *Saskatchewan and Aboriginal Peoples in the 21st Century.* Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations 1997.

Note: Region 1 encompasses Statistics Canada Census Divisions 17 & 18 and covers more area than the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District which corresponds to Census Division 18. Census Division 17 includes the major communities of Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Glaslyn, Maidstone, etc.and RM's 468-472, 498-502, 529, 561, 588, and 622.

- The table below reveals the population growth of some Northern Saskatchewan municipalities and First Nation reserves since 1991, as well as growth rates for the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District and the province as a whole during this period.

- Unlike Saskatchewan as a whole, and especially its many southern and central communities, some northern Saskatchewan communities are growing very rapidly.

Population Growth of Selected Northern Communities

Community	Type of Community	1991 Census	Most Recent Population	% Change
• Air Ronge	Northern Village	782	957	22.3%
• Chicken/Black Lake	First Nation Reserve	851	1223	43.7%
• Cumberland House	Northern Village	738	836	13.3%
• Cumberland/Cumberland House	First Nation Reserve	239	351	46.9%
• Fond du Lac	First Nation Reserve	656	798	21.6%
• Ile A La Crosse	Northern Village	1290	1478	14.5%
• La Loche	Northern Village	1691	1966	16.3%
• La Ronge	Northern Town	2578	2964	15.0%
• Stony Rapids	Northern Hamlet	194	233	20.1%
• Turnor Lake/Birch Narrows	First Nation Reserve	224	287	28.1%
• Turnor Lake	Northern Hamlet	185	198	7.0%
• **Northern Saskatchewan Administration District**		26,735	36,000 (est. 2000)	34.6%
• **Saskatchewan**		988,928	1,024,477	3.6%

Notes:

1. The boundaries of the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District correspond to those of Census Divisi #18 of Statistics Canada.

Sources:

1. Most recent populations for northern municipalities are from the *2000 Northern Municipal Directory, Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing*, January 19, 2000. These are provided by the communities and generally correspond to 1996 Census statistics, with some exceptions, such as Ile A La Crosse. Current (2000) populations are likely higher.
2. The population data for First Nations reserves are from ***First Nations Profiles, Registered Populations a of April 2000***, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada, Electronic Service Delivery, http://esd.inac.gc.ca.
3. The population estimates for the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District are drawn from the following document: Interim Northern Development Board, *The Northern Saskatchewan Strategic* ***Opportunities Assessment*** , September 1999.
4. The population statistics for the province of Saskatchewan is from Statistics Canada, ***CANSIM Matrices 6367-6379***, at website: http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/People/Population/demo31.ahtm
5. 1991 Census population data is drawn from Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, ***Saskatchewan Census Population 1991 & 1996***, at website: http://www.gov.sk.ca/bureau.stats/pop/pop1.htm.

1. 4Socio-Economic Features

	Category	All North (See Note 1)	Part North (See Note 2)	Saskatchewan
Population	Under Age 15	39.0%	41.4%	23.0%
	Over Age 65	4.0%	3.9%	15.0%
	Average Annual Change	±5.0%	±5.0%	±0.5%
Education	Less than Grade 9	30.0%	35.9%	13.0%
	Grade 9 - 12	28.6%	28.3%	29.9%
	Full Grade 12	5.9%	5.0%	11.0%
	Some Post-Secondary	5.6%	10.4%	4.9%
	Diploma or Certificate	13.7%	10.7%	16.7%
	Trades Certificate	5.0%	5.4%	3.0%
	College Degree or Diploma	9.8%	4.5%	5.8%
Employment	Labour Force Participation Rate	< 55%	49.3%	> 67%
	% Labour Force Growth to 2016	51%	42%	37%
	Employment Rate (Total L.F. Pop)	> 40%	66.3%	> 63%
	Unemployment Rate	> 20%	26.3%	< 7%
	Industry of All Types	27.0%	36.6%	37.0%
	Government & Public Services	38.0%	41.5%	17.0%
	Other Services	35.0%	21.9%	46.0%
	New Jobs required in 1996 for Parity	3,700	N/A	0
	New Jobs required in 2016 for Parity	6,900	N/A	0
Poverty	LICO Poverty Line 1997	$28,119	N/A	
	BNL Poverty Line 1997	$16,126	N/A	
	% of Families In Poverty In 1996	53%	42.0%	16%
	% of Families earning $50,000+	25%	25.4%	48%
Housing	# Persons per Room	1.5	N/A	.20
	# Rooms per Person	0.67	N/A	2.50
	Average House Value (West Side)	$23,357	N/A	$75,230
	(East Side)	$33,840	N/A	
	(Central)	$47,239	N/A	
	(Athabasca)	$14,044	N/A	
	Owned by Occupant	37.0%	N/A	68.0%
	Require Minor Repairs	32.0%	NIA	31.0%
	Require Major Repairs	28.0%	N/A	9.0%

Note 1: Averages reported for "All North" include the urban areas of La Ronge-Air Ronge and Creighton-Denare Beach.

Note 2: Averages reported for "Part North" do not include the urban areas of La Ronge-Air Ronge and Creighton-Denare Beach.

Source: Interim Northern Development Board, *The Northern Saskatchewan Strategic Opportunities Assessment Summary Report*, September 1999.

APPENDIX 2: STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF NORTHERN MUNICIPAL SYSTEM

2.1 Number, Types and Criteria for Municipal Incorporation

Criteria for Classes of Municipal Governments in Northern Saskatchewan

- Northern Saskatchewan has 24 individual, incorporated municipalities that are grouped into three different types – northern towns, northern villages and northern hamlets. In addition, Northern Saskatchewan has 11 northern settlements that are unincorporated 'quasi-municipalities,' each having their own elected advisory board.

- The criteria and processes for the incorporation of northern municipalities and settlements are outlined in *The Northern Municipalities Act*.

- There are also a number of recreational subdivisions in Northern Saskatchewan that was established prior to the enactment of *The Northern Municipalities Act*. These are designated as recreational subdivisions by the Minister and have some obligations, such as completing operating budgets, although they are not a municipal corporation.

Type of Municipality	Number	Minimum Population	Dwellings/ Businesses	Other Incorporation Criteria
Northern Municipalities				
Northern Towns	2	500	n/a	council petition of 15 electors
Northern Villages	13	100	50	council petition of 15 electors
Northern Hamlets	9	50	25	petition of 10 electors
Quasi-Municipalities				
Northern Settlements	11	30	n/a	Ministerial order, must elect a local advisory committee to retain status
Other				
Recreational Subdivisions	14			Ministerial designation

SOURCES: *Municipal Directory*: Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing, 2000, and *The Northern Municipalities Act*.

- The forms and criteria for northern municipal entities are outlined below:
  - Northern Towns ≥500 population, council petition of 15 electors;
  - Northern Villages ≥100 population, council petition of 15 electors;
  - Northern Hamlets ≥50 population, petition of 10 electors; and
  - Northern Settlements ≥30 population, must elect a local advisory committee to retain status.

Criteria for Classes of Local Municipal Governments in Canada

- In defining different types of municipalities other provinces, in contrast to Northern Saskatchewan, use the following criteria:
  - Higher population ranges,
  - Minimum assessment base, or
  - Combinations of geographic area and population density.

- Some provinces have developed other criteria and measures to distinguish the nature and capacity of communities including:
  - Size of Majority of Lots/Properties (Alberta); and
  - Level of Services Provided (New Brunswick)

2.2 Criteria for Classifying Local Municipalities in Canada

	Cities	Towns	Villages	Resort Villages	Rural Municipalities
Saskatchewan	• **5,000**	• **500**	• **100** • **50 dwellings**	• **100** • **50 dwellings**	• **No minimum criteria**
Alberta	• 10,000	• 1,000	• 300	• Summer Village type repealed in '94 (none being created)	• 1,000 • Called Municipal Districts
British Columbia	• 5,000	• Population between 2,500 -5,000	• Population under 2,500	• No minimum population criteria	• Area greater than 800 ha & density under 5 persons/ha • Called District Municipalities
Manitoba	• 7,500	• 1,000 residents and density of at least 400 residents/square km • Called Urban Municipalities previous towns & villages with populations under 1000 retained		N/A	• 1,000 residents and a population density less than 400 residents per square km
New Brunswick	• 10,000	• 1,500 pop. and provides level of services the Minister deems appropriate.	• No specific requirements or criteria.	N/A	N/A
Newfoundland & Labrador	• Established by legislation	• No specific criteria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northwest Territories	• $200 million assessment	• $50 million assessment	• $10 million assessment	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia	• Now part of Regional Municipalities	• Application by at least 100 electors	• Continued as corporate bodies, no new ones being created	N/A	• No specific criteria • Called counties & districts
Ontario	• 15,000 if previously a village or town, 25,000 if a township	• Not less than 2,000	• Not less than 500	N/A	• Not less than 1,000 • Called Townships
Prince Edward Island	• Established by legislation	• Petition signed by 25 residents can establish Towns or Communities, prior Villages are considered communities.		• Petition by at least 15 permanent & 15 temporary residents	N/A
Quebec	• Established by legislation, charters or letters patent.		N/A	N/A	• No specific criteria
Yukon	• Estimated population of 2,500 or more	• Estimated population of 300 or more	• Have been given town status	N/A	• Rural Structures can be created by petition of 30% of voters

APPENDIX 3: FUNCTIONAL FEATURES OF NORTHERN MUNICIPAL SYSTEM

3.1 Legislated Responsibilities of Northern Municipalities

➢ The functional responsibilities of municipal governments are prescribed in municipal legislation as either mandatory or optional. In legislation, the general responsibilities and functions of Northern Saskatchewan municipalities are shown below.

Legislated Responsibilities of Northern Municipalities

Mandatory Functions

Mandatory: all municipalities must:

- repair and maintain streets and roads;
- administer and enforce building and fire prevention standards;
- conduct council member elections and hold council meetings;
- appoint staff (administrator or clerk, treasurer, and assessor); and
- prepare and adopt an annual budget, and levy taxes on property.

Optional Functions

Optional: all municipalities may:

- provide utilities including water, sewer and solid waste control;
- provide fire, police, ambulance, and emergency services;
- license businesses and other activities;
- adopt planning and zoning controls;
- provide recreational and cultural facilities and services, such as parks & libraries;
- provide special housing and care homes;
- promote economic development and tourism;
- promote public health;
- enter into agreements and make grants; and
- borrow and invest funds.

Unique Statutory Provisions on Functions

Unique Statutory Provisions on Functions of Northern Municipalities:

The Northern Municipalities Act identified the following as municipal functions:

- regulating store hours;
- controlling the maintenance and occupancy of property;
- heating, power and gas utilities.

Only *The Northern Municipalities Act* has provisions regarding:

- establishing municipal development corporations.

SOURCES: Saskatchewan, ***Report of the Advisory Committee on Inter-Community Cooperation and Community Quality of Life 1993***, *The Urban Municipality Act, 1984*, *The Rural Municipality Act, 1989*, and *The Northern Municipalities Act*.

➢ There are often major differences in the requirements and regulations regarding how certain types and sizes of municipalities perform certain functions such as:

- policing;
- fire protection;
- assessment; and
- borrowing, setting utility rates, etc.

3.2 Northern Municipal Functions By Expenditure

Large Variation in the Expenditures of Northern Municipalities

- While the legislative responsibilities of different types of municipalities are largely the same, the financial expenditures of municipalities in performing different functions vary greatly among northern municipalities.

- Financial expenditure statistics for 1997 reveal the following;
  - The larger northern municipalities – towns – spend a smaller percentage of their total expenditures on providing general government than either villages or hamlets.

	% of Total Expenditures - 1997				
Type of Municipality	General Gov't	Roads & Transport'n	Protective Services	Utilities	Recreation & Culture
Northern Municipalities					
• Northern Towns	24%	18%	17%	16%	18%
• Northern Villages	34%	11%	3%	19%	14%
• Northern Hamlets	36%	3%	8%	1%	21%
Total North	**31%**	**12%**	**7%**	**15%**	**17%**

SOURCE: Compiled from Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing, *'Municipal financial statistics for the year ended December 31, 1997'*.

NOTES:
1. General Government expenditures include administrative costs, salaries, remuneration of councillors, office expenses, advertising, election expenses, etc.
2. Protective Services includes policing, fire, ambulance, building inspections, EMO, etc.
3. Recreation and Culture includes parks, libraries, recreation facilities, and community projects and programs for northern hamlets.

APPENDIX 4: FINANCIAL FEATURES OF NORTHERN MUNICIPAL SYSTEM

4.1 Northern Municipal Revenue Sources

Large Variation in the Primary Sources of Revenue

- The fiscal capacity of municipal governments is directly related to their authority to raise revenues from their own sources such as property taxes, utility charges, and user fees, licenses, permits, and so on, as well as grants and transfers from senior levels of government.

- The percentage of total revenues derived from each revenue source varies greatly among the three types of northern municipalities.

Large Variation in the Reliance on Provincial Grants & Transfers

- The table below reveals that all Northern municipalities rely on provincial transfers. The smaller northern municipalities (i.e., hamlets and villages) rely more heavily on provincial grants and transfers than larger municipalities (i.e., towns).

	% of Total Revenues - 1997				
Type of Municipality	Property Taxes	Service, User & Utility Fees	Grants in Lieu of Taxes	Grants & Transfers	Other
Northern Municipalities					
• Northern Towns	48%	29%	1%	16%	6%
• Northern Villages	12%	30%	1%	54%	3%
• Northern Hamlets	2%	27%	0%	64%	7%
Total North	**19%**	**28%**	**1%**	**47%**	**5%**

SOURCE: Compiled from Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing. '*Municipal financial statistics for the year ended December 31, 1997*'.

NOTES:
1. Grants In-Lieu of Property Taxes includes federal and provincial grants in-lieu.
2. Grants and Transfers include federal and provincial grants and transfers.
3. Service, User & Utility Fees include revenues from the following categories: General Government Services, Protective Services, Transportation Services, Environmental Health Services, Public Health & Welfare Services, Environmental Development Services, Recreation & Cultural Development Services, and Utilities.
4. Other Revenues includes Interest, Dividends, Penalties, Commissions and Miscellaneous items.

4.2 Total Revenues of Northern Municipal Entities

Large Variation in the Total Revenues of Northern Municipal Entities

54% with revenues less than $250,000

83% with Revenues Less than $1 million.

- The amount of total revenues derived from all revenue sources varies greatly among northern municipalities

- The table below reveals the following:

  - Almost 54% of all northern municipal entities have total revenues less than $250,000.
  - Almost 83% of northern municipal entities have total revenues of less than $1 million.

Range	Hamlets	Villages	Towns	Settlements	Total	%
Under $49,999	-	-	-	1	1	3%
$50,000-99,000	-	-	-	7	7	20%
$100,000-249,999	8	1	-	2	11	31%
$250,000-499,999	1	2	-	-	3	9%
$500,000-749,999		6	-	-	6	17%
$750,000-999,000		1	-	-	1	3%
$1 million – $4.999million		3	2	1	6	17%
TOTAL	9	13	2	11	35	100%

SOURCE: Compiled from Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing, ***Municipal financial statistics for the year ended December 31, 1998***.

4.3 Assessment Base of Northern Municipal Entities

Large Variation in the Assessment Base of Northern Municipal Entities

50% have Assessment Base Less than $1 Million

75% have Assessment Base Less than $5 Million

- The assessment base varies greatly among the different types of northern municipal units in the province;

- The table below reveals the following:

- Almost 50% of all northern municipal entities in the province have a total assessment base of less than $1 million.
- Almost 75% of northern municipal entities have a total assessment base of less than $5 million.

Range	Hamlets	Villages	Towns	Settlements	Total	%
Under $499,999	2	-	-	7	9	26%
$500,000-999,999	5	1	-	2	8	23%
$1– 2.499 -million	-	2	-	2	4	11%
$2.5–4.999 million	2	3	-	-	5	14%
$5 – 9.999 -million	-	5	-	-	5	14%
$10 – 49.9 -million	-	2	-	-	2	6%
$50 – 99.9 -million	-	-	2	-	2	6%
TOTAL	9	13	2	11	35	100%

SOURCE: Compiled from Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing.
1998 confirmed assessment statistics as of May 10, 1999.

4.4 Mill Rates of Northern Municipal Entities

Large Variation in the Mill Rates of Northern Municipal Entities

- There is a large variation in the municipal mill rates among the different types of northern municipal entities.

Mill Rates Range from 2% to 27%

- The table below reveals that mill rates for northern municipal entities vary from a high of 27% to a low of 2%.

1999 MILL RATES FOR NORTHERN MUNICIPAL UNITS

Northern Municipalities	Number	Average Mill Rate	Highest	Lowest
• Northern Towns	2	16.1	16.6	15.5
• Northern Villages	13	14.3	27.0	2.0
• Northern Hamlets	9	4.7	5.5	3.3
• Northern Settlement	11	5.7	6.8	4.4
TOTAL	**35**	**9.2**	**27.0**	**2.0**

APPENDIX 5: MODELS OF REGIONAL MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

Introduction

- This appendix provides a comparative overview of various models of regional municipal governance in other jurisdictions in Canada and Northern Saskatchewan. This appendix consists of two subsections:
  1. Regional Governance in Northern Saskatchewan
  2. Regional Governance in Other Jurisdictions

- The subsection on 'Regional Governance in Northern Saskatchewan' profiles the existing forms of regional governance in the North with a special focus on many of the major 'regional authorities' that have been established for that purpose.

- The subsection on 'Regional Governance in Other Jurisdictions' profiles the statutory frameworks of other provinces with special attention to the types of provisions that they contain regarding, among other things, the following:
  - Structural Frameworks for Regional Governance
  - Organizational Frameworks for Regional Governance
  - Functional Frameworks for Regional Governance
  - Financial Frameworks for Regional Governance
  - Processes Frameworks for Regional Governance

Definition of Regional Governance

- Regional governance can refer to an array of arrangements within a broader 'regional,' rather than a narrower 'local,' geographic area. Examples of such arrangements include:
  - One-tier regional municipal system with regional governments but without local municipal governments;
  - Two-tier regional municipal system with both local and regional municipal governments and/or possibly also regional municipal authorities;
  - Inter-municipal coordinating committees; and
  - Municipal and non-municipal (i.e., governmental or non-governmental) coordinating committees.

- The fundamental features of various forms of regional governance are that they entail joint approaches on the part of neighbouring municipal governments or communities within a given region to perform the basic functions of governance including, for example, any one or more of the following:
  - Joint Land-use Planning and Development
  - Joint Service planning and Provision
  - Joint Infrastructure Planning and Provision
  - Joint Administration
  - Joint Financing

- The defining feature of regional governance is not the particular structure of the municipal system, but the geographic basis of the governance or decision-making processes for each of the aforementioned functions.

- Regional 'municipal government' *per se* is only one form of regional governance.

1. REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

- Northern Saskatchewan does not have fully incorporated 'regional municipal governments'. This is not to say, however, that Northern Saskatchewan does not have some forms of regional municipal governance. Regional municipal governance in Northern Saskatchewan takes two major forms:
  - The first form is an array of formal and informal bilateral and multilateral inter-municipal agreements either for delivering various services or for sharing facilities, equipment, and staff. Such agreements tend to exist both on a bilateral and a multilateral basis.
  - The second form is an array of regional municipal authorities, such as many of those identified below in the table of 'Selected Regional Authorities in Northern Saskatchewan'. The table includes all forms of regional authorities and not merely municipal ones or ones that involve only municipalities. In the case of many, though by no means all, of those authorities municipal governments have a substantial role.

- Regional authorities involving municipalities tend to have the following characteristics:
  - They are created either by exclusively by member municipal governments, jointly by the member municipal governments and the provincial government and, in some instances, also the federal government, and various private sector entities.
  - They tend to perform advisory, coordinating, planning and development, and management roles;
  - They tend to perform core functions related to service delivery; infrastructure planning, development and maintenance; economic planning and development; and resources management.
  - They tend to be funded on cost-shared basis either exclusively among the member municipal governments or both among member municipal governments, the provincial government and, in some instances, also the federal government and private sector entities.

- To reiterate, the table below reveals that there is a substantial degree of regional governance in Northern Saskatchewan that involves regional 'authorities' established to maximize effectiveness, efficiency and equity in performing various functions on a regional basis.

- The table also reveals, however, the absence of regional municipal 'governments' within the scope of the regional governance framework.

- Some logical questions that emerge here and which should continue to be addressed in the future are:
  - "Why regional authorities, but not regional governments?"
  - "When would it make sense either to supplement or supplant the multiplicity of regional municipal 'authorities', with regional municipal 'governments' comparable to those in some other provinces?"

Selected Regional Authorities in Northern Saskatchewan

1. **Economic Development Authorities:**
   (a) Vision North Community Futures (2);
   (b) Community-based Regional Economic Development Organization (CREDO) (6): and
   (c) Interim Northern Development Review Board.

2. **Educational Authorities:**
   (a) Northern Lights School Division; and
   (b) Northland Regional College.

3. **Employment and Training Authority**
   (a) Northern Labour Market Committee

4. **Environmental Control Authorities:**
   (a) Environmental Quality Committees (3); and
   (b) Northern Mines Monitoring Secretariat (NMMS).

5. **Financial Management Authority**
   (a) Northern Revenue Sharing Trust Account Management Board

6. **Health and Welfare Services:**
   (a) Health Districts (3).

7. **Housing Authorities:**
   (a) Regional Housing Authorities (8).

8. **Library Authority:**
   (a) Pahkisimon Nuyeah Library System.

9. **Recreational Authorities:**
   (a) Regional Recreational Associations (5); and
   (b) Northern Recreation Coordinating Committee (NRCC).

10. **Transportation Authorities:**
    (a) Area Transportation Planning Committees (2).

2. REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

- This sub-section provides an overview of several key facets of regional municipal governance in other Canadian jurisdictions. The focus is only on the most notable or distinct forms of regional municipal governments and authorities and does not deal with the multitude of other regional entities comparable to those identified for Saskatchewan in the previous section.

- This sub-section provides an overview of the following frameworks related to regional municipal governance in other jurisdictions in Canada either as outlined in their in their respective statutes or as they are in practice:
  - Structural Frameworks
  - Organizational Frameworks
  - Functional frameworks
  - Financial Frameworks
  - Processes Frameworks

2.1 Structural Frameworks of Regional Governance

- Regional governance in other jurisdictions takes either a one-tier form or a two-tier form.

- Examples of one-tier municipal systems consisting of only one regional municipal government, without any local municipal governments, that is responsible for governing the entire region include:
  - Ontario's newly created regional municipal governments.
  - Nova Scotia's newly created Halifax Regional Municipality and Cape Breton Regional Municipality both of which were established when the provincial government dissolved large and small neighbouring municipalities to create one-tier regional municipalities.

- Examples of two-tier systems consisting of both local municipalities, which make up the lower-tier, and an upper-tier regional government or authority include the following:
  - Ontario has used this model of regional government in the past for both its highly populated regional municipalities such as Ottawa-Carleton and Hamilton-Wentworth, and its less-populated counties such as Simcoe and Essex-Windsor.
  - Quebec has used the two-tier model of regional governance for its highly populated 'Urban Communities' such as the Montreal and Quebec City regions.
  - British Columbia has used the two-tier model for its Regional Districts that, in effect, are upper-tier regional authorities that perform certain functions needed by those living in local municipalities situated within their boundaries.

- In recent years the trend has been away from two-tier regional governance. Such a trend is clearly evident in the regionalization initiatives in Ontario and Nova Scotia. The Ontario government has decided to replace the two-tier regional governance system with a one-tier regional governance system as part of its efforts to reduce the number of municipalities in the province. Similarly, the Nova Scotia government has consolidated some neighbouring local municipalities to create regional municipalities in the Halifax and Cape Breton regions.

- Evidently, the Quebec government is predisposed to replace both existing local governments and two-tier regional governance systems with one-tier regional governance system as part of its ongoing effort to reduce the number of municipalities in that province.

2.2 Organizational Frameworks for Regional Governance

- This sub-section provides an overview of the organizational framework for regional governance in other jurisdictions with a special focus on the:
  - Size of regional councils or boards; and
  - Selection of members of regional councils or boards.

2.2.1 Size of Regional Councils and Boards

- Generally, provinces allow regional councils and boards to determine their precise size within a set range. In some cases either the precise number or the range is specified in legislation, in other cases the legislation empowers the Lieutenant Governor in Council to set it. Newfoundland's legislation, for example, specifies that if regional governments are to be established, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may prescribe the number of persons that may serve on the regional council.

2.2.2 Selection of Regional Council or Board Members and Chairs

- Generally, members of regional councils or boards are selected either by the voters or the member councils. Those that are selected voters run either on a ward or on an at-large basis.

(a) Elected by Voters

- Examples of regional entities governed by members who are elected by voters include Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
  - Nova Scotia's legislation states that regional councillors are elected directly by voters on a ward basis, but the heads of the regional councils are elected on an at-large basis.
  - Newfoundland's legislation states that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by order, establish and change the number and boundaries of wards for a region and fix the number of councillors to be elected for each ward. Members of the regional council must choose, from among their membership, one councillor to be chairperson. Although the enabling legislation is in place, to date no regional governments or authorities have been created pursuant to it.

(b) Selected by Local Councils

- An example of regional entities governed by members who are selected by local councils that are members of the regional entity include:
  - Ontario's Regional Municipalities;
  - Quebec's Urban Communities, Regional County Municipalities, and the Kativik Regional Government;
  - Newfoundland's prospective regional municipal councils envisioned in its new municipal act.

- Newfoundland's legislation states that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by order, establish and change the number or proportion of councillors of a regional council that are to be appointed from elected councils of cities and towns in the region.

(c) Combination of Elected and Selected

- An example of regional entities consisting of a combination of elected and selected (i.e., selected by councils) officials is British Columbia's Regional Districts. These regional authorities are governed by a Board consisting of a combination of *elected councillors* that are selected by member municipal councils, and *elected representatives* who are directly elected by voters of unincorporated electoral areas.

(d) Selected by Regional Council

- Generally, members of the regional council select the head of the regional council. Examples include those for regional councils in Nova Scotia and any that might be established in Newfoundland.

(e) Appointed by Minister

- Examples of regional authorities with appointed boards are Alberta's Regional Services Commissions. Members to the Boards are initially appointed by the Minister of Municipal Affair but once the initial term expires, member municipalities of the Commission may appoint their own representatives.

2.2.3 Management Arrangements

- Generally regional governments and authorities have considerable authority and autonomy in determining their management arrangements. The only major limitation to their authority and autonomy is the duty to appoint some types of senior officials. For example:
  - Quebec's regional governments are required to appoint a Secretary-Treasurer;
  - Ontario's regional municipalities are required to appoint a Clerk, a Treasurer, and one or more Auditors;
  - Nova Scotia' regional municipalities are required to appoint a Clerk, a Treasurer, an Engineer, and an Auditor; and
- British Columbia's Regional Districts are required to appoint a CAO, a Clerk, a Treasurer and an Auditor.

2.3 Functional Frameworks for Regional Governance

- Regional governments in Canada perform a variety of functions. The more common ones tend to be the following:
  - Land-use planning and development.
  - The planning, development, and maintenance of roads;
  - The distribution of water;
  - The collection and disposal of waste;
  - The collection and treatment of sewerage.

- The number and types of functions performed by regional governments vary across jurisdictions and in some instances they even differ both within a particular jurisdiction across various regions and a particular region over time. One reason for this is that some provinces grant regional governments considerable autonomy in deciding the function they will perform. Another reason for this is that where there are two-tier regional governments there might be a statutory provision authorizing regional government to perform any function that local municipal governments either do not or cannot perform. For example, 'regional governments' in Ontario have the authority to assume any function that member municipalities within their boundaries do not have the capacity to provide.

- Regional governance entities can be grouped into two major categories based on the number of functions they perform—single-function entities and multi-function entities. Although some regional authorities in Canada are only authorized to perform a single function, the majority of them are authorized to perform several functions. In some cases, regional entities that were originally created to perform a single function eventually began performing several functions. For example, British Columbia's Regional Districts were initially created to provide regional planning functions on behalf of municipalities within their regional boundaries. Over time, however, these entities have been granted the authority to provide several other functions including the distribution of water, the collection and disposal of sewage, fire protection and regulation, recreation, libraries, and animal control.

(a) Functions of British Columbia's Regional Entities

- British Columbia's *Municipal Act* states that a regional district is an incorporated regional entity with the authority to make rules for the provision, operation, and administration of a service, and for the management of property under its control. In listing their functions the Act states that regional districts are allowed to pass bylaws for the provision of various general services (e.g., planning), local services (e.g., the supply, treatment, storage, and distribution of water), and extended services (e.g., promotion of economic development). The functions of various regional districts are varied, but functions of a typical one might include:
  - Planning
  - Recreation and libraries
  - Fire protection and regulation
  - Street lighting
  - Solid waste disposal
  - Water supply and distribution
  - Sewage collection and disposal

(b) Functions of Ontario's Regional Entities:

- According to the *Regional Municipalities Act, 1990,* Ontario's Regional Municipalities may perform the following functions:
  - the addition or removal of roads form the regional road system;
  - planning for road construction, maintenance, and safety;
  - the establishment, construction, maintenance, operation, improvement and the extension of waterworks systems and the financing thereof relating to such supply and distribution of water;
  - the establishment, construction, maintenance, operation, improvement and the extension of sewage systems and the financing thereof relating to the collection and disposal of such sewage;
  - the establishment and control of a Police Board and a Regional Police Force for the purpose of enforcing the bylaws passed by the Regional Council and Area Municipalities;
  - the licensing, regulating, and governing of vehicles, the insurance of vehicles and their operators, and for licensing, regulating, and governing salvage shops, salvage yards, and dealers of second hand goods;
  - the appointment of a Regional Fire Co-ordinator who shall be responsible for the establishment of an emergency fire service plan and program for the regional area;
  - the establishment and operation, along with area municipalities, of a centralized communication system; and
  - the assumption of any or all of the waste management powers and facilities for all of its area municipalities.

(c) Functions of Alberta's Regional Entities

- Alberta's Regional Services Commissions *are mandated to provide various municipal infrastructure services in their area.* Alberta's *Municipal Act* states that a Regional Services Commission may provide any municipal services specified within the provincial regulation establishing. The commissions tend to be used to perform functions such as planning, hard and soft services, and assessment services on a region-wide basis both to member municipalities and other areas.

(d) Functions of Quebec's Regional Entities

(i) Functions of Urban Communities:

- According to legislation Quebec's Urban Communities may perform the following functions:
  - air purification;
  - water purification;
  - waste recovery and recycling;
  - public health;
  - recreation and parks;
  - police;
  - coordination of emergency measures respecting the health and safety of persons or the protection of property;
  - public transportation;
  - the adoption of a development plan for its territory;
  - the assessment of immovables and places of businesses for its territory; and
  - improving the quality of water sites and promoting access thereto.

(ii) Functions of Regional County Municipalities:

- Regional County Municipalities must perform the following functions:
  - land use planning and development;
  - county watercourses;
  - property assessment;
  - sale of immovables; and
  - administration of unorganized territories.

- They may also provide the following functions:
  - development of unorganized territories;
  - bodies for industrial, commercial and tourist promotion;
  - industrial parks;
  - participation in local investment funds;
  - technical assistance for enterprises on their territory; and
  - assistance for nonprofit organizations devoted to economic promotion and development.

(iii) Functions of Kativik Regional Government:

- Quebec's Kativik Regional Government, which is an upper tier regional government in a two tier system in northern Quebec, is mandated to provide for:
  - local administration;
  - transport and communications;
  - police; and
  - labour market training.

(e) Functions of New Brunswick's Regional Entities

- Local Service Districts in New Brunswick were created in 1967 to provide municipal services to the residents of unincorporated areas of the province. This can include any municipal service that municipalities would normally perform within their boundaries.

(f) Functions of Newfoundland's Regional Entities

- Newfoundland's Municipal Act contains an extensive list of functions for any regional governments or authorities that may be established. The Act states that the cabinet may, subject to a feasibility study, determine which, if any of the functions listed below regional municipal governments or authorities will perform. The Act adds that when a regional government or authority performs those functions, they stop being the responsibility of a city, town, local service district committee or other body that had performed the designated function.

- The functions that may be performed, either in whole or in part, by a regional government either for the entire region or part of a region include:

  - the construction and operation of regional water supply systems, regional sewage disposal systems, regional storm drainage systems and regional solid waste disposal sites, including facilities designated in the order as regional facilities, and the charging of user fees on cities or municipalities benefited by those facilities;
  - the provision of regional police services, ambulance services, animal and dog control, and other similar services;
  - the provision, subject to the *Urban and Rural Planning Act,* of regional planning, local area planning in areas outside the jurisdiction of towns and cities within the region, joint planning and development control along protected roads, in protected areas and other designated areas within the region;
  - the undertaking of another municipal function that a municipality or city performs or is permitted to perform under this Act by agreement with municipalities or cities subject to the recovery of the full cost from the municipality or city; and
  - the provision, by agreement with municipalities or cities, subject to the recovery of the full cost from the municipality or city, of:
    (i) contract services,
    (ii) tax billing and collection services,
    (iii) engineering services,
    (iv) management consulting services,
    (v) data processing, and
    (vi) other technical and administrative services
    that may be required by municipalities.

2.4 Financial Frameworks for Regional Governance

- Generally regional municipal governments and authorities have accesses to a variety of revenue sources comparable to those of local municipalities.

(a) Property Taxes

- The property tax is a major revenue source for one-tier regional governments. In two-tier systems, generally the upper tier councils or boards are prohibited from levying and collecting property taxes directly on their own. However, as explained below, they are allowed to request that a local municipality add a levy to the property tax bill to cover the cost of providing a particular service to ratepayers.

(b) Service Levies on Residents

- Levies on residents are used extensively both by regional governments and regional authorities. Generally, the levies are imposed by the regional entities but added to the local property tax bill by local municipalities who collect them and submit them to the regional entities. A case in point is British Columbia's Regional Districts.

(c) Levies on Local Municipalities

- Another major source of revenues for some regional entities in a two-tier system is levies on local municipalities. Such levies are based on requisitions by the regional entity on local municipalities either for general operating costs or for the cost of providing certain services. Generally the contributions are based on a per capita formula that is either specified in legislation or in a bylaw. Ontario's legislation, for instance, indicates that the upper-tier Regional Council may, by bylaw, raise revenues by special levy or levies, against one or more area municipalities for, among other things, the distribution of water and the collection of waste.

(d) Licensing Fees, Fines and Penalties

- Another source of revenue for some regional authorities is the monies collected from issuing licensing fees, fines, and penalties.

(e) Investments

- Another source of revenue for some regional authorities is returns on investments. Some regional entities are permitted to use own-sources revenues to invest in securities or any other approved funds.

(f) Bonds

- Another source of revenue for some regional authorities is to issue bonds. They are permitted to issue bonds for certain capital and operating expenditures.

(g) Provincial Grants

- Another major source of revenues for regional entities is provincial and federal government grants. This includes both various infrastructure and service delivery grants, and grants-in-lieu of taxes to those that have the authority to impose property taxes. In some instances such grants are given to cover basic operating and capital costs. In Alberta the provincial cabinet provides the Regional Services Commissions an amount that will enable them to meet the authorized capital and operating expenditures that it considers to be required for the development and operation of their services and facilities. Such sums may be paid by the provincial government in the form of a grant, advance, loan, or by the purchase of securities related to any borrowing by the commission.

2.5 Processes Frameworks for Regional Governance

- Provinces with regional municipal governments and authorities have included a set of provisions within their statutes regarding the 'processes' for their creation and dissolution. Such provisions are usually included either in a general or in a specific statute of the provincial legislature.

- The relevant statutes not only states who may create and dissolve regional governments and authorities, but also the procedures that they must follow for that purpose. More specifically, they usually stipulate who possesses the authority to initiate, review, object to, and approve the creation or dissolution of regional governments and authorities and the means by which they must do so.

- Although all jurisdictions with regional municipal governments and authorities have included provisions regarding the authority frameworks for creating them, evidently none has included a set of criteria (e.g., minimum population, minimum assessment base, or minimum geographic area) that must be met in creating and dissolving them.

- The focus in the remainder of this subsection is on some general models of regionalization processes that currently exist in other jurisdictions in Canada.

2.5.1 Overview of Regionalization Processes in Other Jurisdictions

- There are at least three key elements of the regionalization processes of other jurisdictions that are important to profile here:
  - Authority for Regionalization
  - Mechanisms and Instruments for Regionalization
  - Stages for Regionalization

- The following overview of the regionalilzation processes in selected provinces reveals some important features regarding each of those elements listed above.

(a) Authority for Regionalization Processes

- First, the overview of the regionalization processes in various provinces reveals that it is useful to distinguish between 'authority to initiate' and 'authority to approve' them. Generally authority for those two facets of regionalization may rest with any one or more of the following: the provincial minister responsible for municipalities and the provincial cabinet, the local municipal councils, and the local electorate. Invariably, the authority of the local councils and the local electorate is limited to initiating such processes and at most providing what is tantamount to preliminary ratification of regionalization initiatives. However, the final ratification and approval for such initiatives generally rests with provincial ministers and cabinets. Even in cases where resolutions of local councils or plebiscites of the local electorate are either required or permitted, generally they are not the authoritative instruments in establishing or not establishing municipal regional governments or authorities. The authoritative instruments are provincial ministerial orders, cabinet orders and, of course, any legislation that may enacted by the provincial legislature. An interesting exception is found in Ontario where if a restructuring initiative that entails regional governance is approved by local councils or electors in the ways prescribed in legislation, then the minister must implement it. Moreover, in Ontario, an order for restructuring and establishing a regional governance may be issued by any commissioner appointed by the minister to produce a restructuring proposal for a given locality.

(b) Stages of Regionalization Processes

- Second, the overview reveals that provincial governments have considerable discretion in determining whether regionalization processes will be either one-stage or multi-stage processes. In the case of the one-stage processes they have the authority to decide whether the regionalization process will entail only a ministerial order, a cabinet order, or at their discretion possibly a statute passed by the legislature. In the case of a multi-stage processes generally they have considerable authority in deciding whether the regionalization process will entail several stages such as the following: the preparation of a regionalization proposal; a review of a proposal that may or may not include public hearings; a preliminary ratification of the proposal either by local councils or the local electorate; and final approval by the provincial minister, provincial cabinet or, at their discretion, possibly also the provincial legislature.

(c) Mechanisms and Instruments for Regionalization Processes

- Third, the overview of regionalization processes reveals that there is an array of mechanism and instruments that may be used in regionalilzation processes. Key mechanisms include the use of special committees and commissions established for various purposes including reviewing a particular regionalization proposal, developing a proposal for regionalization, and holding public hearings on any regionalization proposal. Key instruments for regionalization processes include formal and fully developed regionalization proposals, feasibility studies, and commissioned reports. Both in the case of mechanisms and instruments, provincial ministers responsible for municipalities and provincial cabinets have considerable discretion on their use subject to certain limitation in the statutes.

2.5.2 Regionalization Processes in Selected Jurisdictions in Canada

Newfoundland

- Newfoundland's Bill 14, An Act Respecting Municipalities, states that the process for creating regional municipal entities is as follows:

304 (1) the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may, by order, on the recommendation of the minister, and subject to a feasibility report being conducted under section 308,

(i) establish an area, or areas, in the province as a region;
(ii) amalgamate regions and annex areas to regions;
(iii) establish and alter the boundaries of regions; and
(iv) disestablish a region.

308 (1) The minister shall order the preparation of a feasibility report in the prescribed form before his or her making a recommendation for an order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council under section 304 and shall appoint the number of persons that the minister thinks are necessary in order to prepare the report.

(2) The persons conducting the feasibility report shall have the powers of a commissioner under the Public Inquiries Act.

(3) The person conducting the feasibility report shall hold a public hearing in all cases in relation to actions described in paragraphs 304(1)(a) to (d) and shall, where reasonable, hold the hearing in the proposed region or in the area or region affected.

309. (1) Before the ordering of a feasibility report by the minister under section 308, the minister shall publish a notice of his or her intent to do so in a newspaper having a general circulation in the area affected by the feasibility report.

(2) Where a notice of intent is to be publicized by the minister under subsection (1) that directly affects a city, town or region, the minister shall give prior notification of his or her intent to so publish it to the councils of the city, town or region.

Nova Scotia

- Nova Scotia's new *Municipal Government Act* contains the following provisions regarding the process for creating regional municipalities.

372 (1) The [Utility and Review] Board may, when requested by a majority of councils of the municipal units in a county, undertake a study of the form of municipal governments in the county to determine whether a regional municipality would be in the interests of the people of the county.

(2) Where

(a) a study of the form of municipal government in a county to determine whether a regional municipality would be in the interests of the people of the county has been undertaken , whether the study was undertaken by the Minister or was otherwise prepared; and
(b) a majority of the councils of the municipal units in the county request that a regional municipality be established for the county,

the Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Minister, order that a regional municipality be established for the county.

Quebec

- Key provisions in Quebec's *An Act Respecting Municipal Territorial Organization* for creating Regional County Municipalities are as follows:

  (a) the government may, by order, constitute a regional county municipality;

  (b) before recommending to the Government the constitution of a regional county municipality, the Minister of Municipal Affairs shall transmit to each local municipality whose territory is comprised in that of the proposed regional county municipality a document setting out the elements which he proposes to include in the order;

  (c) not later than 45 days after receiving the document, any local municipality may submit its opinion on the proposal to the minister in writing;

  (d) any person may submit his or her objection to the proposal to the Minister within 30 days of publication of the notice;

  (e) the Commission municipale du Quebec shall, at the Minister's requests hold a public hearing on the proposal;

  (e) the Minister may order the consultation of the qualified voters of either all the local municipalities whose territories is comprised in that of the proposed RCM, or of one or several of them; and

  (f) the consultation shall be made by way of a referendum poll, held on the date fixed by the minister.

British Columbia

- Key provisions related to the process for creating British Columbia's regional districts contained in the *Municipal Act are as follows:*

776 On the recommendation of the minister, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by the issue of letters patent, incorporate the residents of an area into a regional district for the purpose of exercising powers conferred on the regional district;

777 (1) he letters patent incorporating a regional district must specify the following:
(i) the name and boundaries of a regional district;
(ii) the municipalities and electoral areas that comprise the regional district;
(iii) the boundaries of each electoral area in the regional district;
(iv) the voting unit for the regional district;
(v) the last date for appointment of municipal directors to the first board;
(vi) the time and manner of the first election of electoral area directors; (vii) the chief election officer;
(viii) the sums that may be borrowed to meet the current lawful expenditures of the regional district in the year of incorporation, and if considered necessary, for the next year;
(ix) the powers, obligations and duties, if any of a municipality that are transferred to the exclusive jurisdiction of the regional district; and
(x) any other provisions and conditions the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary or advisable.

780 (1) On the recommendation of the minister, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by the issue of the letters patent, or by the repeal of existing letter patent and the issue of new letters patent, as necessary, may

(a) amalgamate 2 or more regional districts,
(b) alter the boundaries of 2 or more adjoining regional districts by reducing the area of one and increasing the area of another by the inclusion of the area withdrawn into the district that is increased, or
(c) divide a regional district into two or more regional districts.

Ontario

- Ontario's *Savings and Restructuring Act, 1996 (*Bill 26) contains two important sets of provisions regarding municipal restructuring in section 25 of that statute that may result in regional governance.

- The first set of provisions, contained in sub-section 25.2(2), focus on restructuring and regional governance as a product of local initiative and local consensus. The key provisions for that purpose are as follows:

25 (2) A municipality or local body in a locality may, subject to subsection (3), make a restructuring proposal to restructure municipalities and unorganized territory in the locality by submitting to the Minister a report containing,

(a) *a description of the restructuring proposal in a form and in such detail as the Minister may require; and*

(b) *proof in a form satisfactory to the Minister that,*

(i) the restructuring proposal has the prescribed degree of support of the prescribed municipalities and local bodies in the locality,

(ii) the support was determined in the prescribed manner, and

(iii) the municipalities and local bodies which support the restructuring proposal meet the prescribed criteria.

(3) A restructuring proposal shall not provide for a type of restructuring other than a prescribed type of restructuring.

(4) If a restructuring proposal and report under subsection (2) meet the requirements of this section, the Minister shall, by order implement the restructuring proposal in accordance with the regulations made under subsection (11).

(5) The Minister shall not make an order under subsection (4) to implement the restructuring proposal in a locality if any part of the locality is in a locality for which a commission has been established under section 25(3).

- The second set of provisions, contained in sub-sections 25.2(11) and (12) and various sub-sections of section 25.3, focus on restructuring and regional governance as a product of local initiative but in the absence of a fully developed proposal and possibly also the absence of a local consensus. In such a situation the Minister may establish a commission that is mandated not only not only to produce a restructuring proposal, but also to order it. The key provisions for that purpose are as follows:

25.2(11) Despite any Act, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations setting out the powers that may be exercised by the Minister or a commission established under section 25(3) in implementing a restructuring proposal.

(12) An order made of the Minister or commission implementing a restructuring proposal prevails over any Act or regulation with which it conflicts so long as the order is consistent with the regulations made under subsection (11).

25.3(1) The Minister may establish a commission on or before December 31, 1999 at the request of a municipality in a locality or at the request of a municipality in a locality or at the request of 75 or more residents of an unorganized territory in a locality. The purpose of the commission is to develop a proposal for restructuring the municipalities and unorganized territories in the locality or in such greater areas as the minister may prescribe.

(2) The commission shall develop a restructuring proposal for the prescribed locality or for such part of it as the commission considers advisable.
(3) A restructuring proposal shall not provide for a type of restructuring other than a prescribed type of restructuring.
(4) The commission shall consult with each municipality in the prescribed locality when developing the restructuring proposal and may consult with such other bodies as the commission considers appropriate.
(5) The commission shall prepare a draft of the restructuring proposal and shall give a copy of the draft to each municipality in the prescribed locality and make it available for inspection by members of the public in the prescribed locality.
(6) The commission shall hold not at least one public meeting at which any person who attends is given an opportunity to make representations about the draft.
(7) The commission shall invite written submissions about the draft and shall establish a deadline for receiving them. The commission shall make the submissions available for public inspection by each municipality and by members of the public in the prescribed locality.
(8) The commission shall notify each municipality in the prescribed locality of its opportunity to make representations....
(9) The commission shall give notice to the public in the prescribed locality advising them of the opportunity to...inspect the draft...make representations... and inspect the written submissions received by the commission.
(10) After considering the representations and submissions about the draft the commission shall finalize the restructuring proposal and shall give a copy of it to each municipality in the prescribed locality and make it available for inspection by members of the public in the prescribed locality....

(13) The commission may make orders to implement the restructuring proposal. For the purposes of implementing the proposal, the commission has the powers under regulations made under subsection 25.2(11).

- Subsequent provisions in that statute authorize the minister to establish various other principles and procedures for restructuring purposes.

Yukon

- Yukon has an interesting set of statutory provisions that explicitly sanctions the regional governance involving municipalities and various other governments, including Aboriginal governments. The statutory provisions are designed to sanction the creation of common or joint 'administrative' or 'planning' authorities both either at the regional or local level that would operate in an intergovernmental context. The Municipal Act states:

27. (1) Municipalities may establish with other municipalities, Yukon First Nations, the Government of Canada, and the Government of the Yukon, common administrative or planning structures within a community, region, or area of the Yukon; and these structures shall

(a) remain under the control of the participating governments according to the process they agree on, and

(b) include direct representation by the participating governments.

(2) Municipalities may agree to delegate administrative responsibilities that are within their governing powers to a common administrative and planning structure established under subsection (1).

28. In Consultation with the participating governments, the Commissioner in Executive Council may make regulations respecting the establishment and operation of regional structures under this Act.